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Prologue

Cindersong and Lightfeather woke up with a jolt in the Gathering Place. It was night; stars were twinkling and the wind was whispering calmly. Lightfeather stood up from where she laid while Cindersong stayed where she was with her head up, groggy and confused. The two medicine cats weren't sure why they were at the Gathering Place. "Do you think SoulClan is trying to tell us something?" Lightfeather murmured, gazing around the empty rock.

"I'm not sure," Cindersong replied, standing up slowly and calmly. The fluffy grey medicine cat padded to the Gathering Places' edge and watched the water churn and swirl. It was a perfect mirror to the empty skies. The mirrored image of the half-moon wavered. Cindersong blinked and flicked her ear, unsure of what to say or do.

Suddenly, a new star flew by quickly and silently. It had no glow like a usual star; it was barely noticeable. Cindersong looked up and watched it fly by. It made Lightfeather's stomach twist and Cindersong's heart lurch. They both ignored the sudden feeling as if it were normal.

"A shooting star." Cindersong gazed at it, following the strange star as it traveled. Like an abnormal star, it didn't shine nor leave a momentary trail. Lightfeather noticed it, too. "Is that the sign?" The cream medicine cat wondered, hurrying towards Cindersong.

Cindersong looked over her shoulder and flicked her bushy tail. "Possibly," She answered simply.

"Well they could've given us a better sign! For all we know, it could mean-" Lightfeather's impatient hiss was interrupted as a painfully loud boom came from far away. Cindersong and Lightfeather jumped backwards, their fur spiked up in hostility, as it scared the daylights out of them.

Cindersong opened her mouth to comment, but she couldn't get any words out as a hot wind threw the she-cats to the ground.

Cindersong tumbled away from her territory until her claws hooked on a large crack in the Gathering Places' boulder. Lightfeather tumbled back as well, but found a claw-hold quickly after. The air was hot and rancid. It burnt their throats when they breathed, it stung their eyes even when they squinted, and it seemed to be burning the flesh and sweet-smelling pelts right off of their bodies. The medicine cats found it hard to breathe after the wind came to a complete stop.

The she-cats scrambled up on shaky legs, their fur still spiked up and whiskers twisted. "W-what was that?" Lightfeather gasped, dashing back over to Cindersong. "I... don't know," The grey she-cat murmured, "It sure wasn't a shooting star, that's for sure."

The air around them was hot and stuffy, as if it was a nice greenleaf day. Cindersong coughed until she spat up blood while Lightfeather gagged at the smell. "Why... is it so hard to breathe? Is *this* the sign?" Lightfeather panted after she had stopped gagging.

"I don't know why, Lightfeather, but we can't tell anyone. If SoulClan sends a better sign, I'll tell Marshstar. We can't bring the Clans into panic," Cindersong suggested. Lightfeather didn't argue, just nodded.

Allegiances

RockClan:

Leader-

Marshstar; dark brown tom with dark green eyes.

Deputy-

Silverfeather- thin, silver she-cat with dark silver stripes, left blue eye and right green. @SilverDragonWolf

Medicine Cat-

Cindersong; fluffy grey tabby she-cat with one torn ear, blue eyes. @cinderpelt Apprentice- **Shadowpaw**; black pelt with white spots on her flank, small she-cat with very light blue eyes. @Twilightmoondance

Warriors-

Coldwish; silver tabby tom with blue eyes. @Hylla_Ramirez Apprentice- Greypaw

Softpelt; white as snow, grey eyes, she-cat, Coldwish's sister. (@Slugterrancat)

Whitefire; light grey with white patches that look like flames, ice blue eyes, small she-cat, Snowfern's sister. @ShaeleighMarie Apprentice- Birchpaw

Oakshadow; dark brown tom with black paws and tail, amber eyes, Snowfern's mate. @Slugterrancat

Skystorm; pale ginger she-cat with large green eyes. @emmab54 Apprentice- Jaggedpaw

Sunwing; golden pelt, lighter paws, amber eyes, she-cat, Skystorm

and Oakshadow's sister. @IvyXHawk

Crowflight; grey and black tabby tom, amber eyes, Greypaw's father. Apprentice- Sparkpaw

Stormcloud; grey tom with blue eyes, Darkshine and Crowflight's brother, Ripplecurrent's mate. @midnightskittles Apprentice- Acornpaw

Blazeflame; bright ginger she-cat, white chest, ears, and front paws with one purple eye and one hazel, Sparkpaw, Jaggedpaw, and Birchpaw's mother.

Tigerstripe; brown tabby tom with black stripes, one black paw, blue eyes. @superowl171

Blossomfrost; light fluffy brown fur with white ears and tail tip, pale green eyes.

Apprentices-

Sparkpaw; brown tabby she-cat with white front paws, amber eyes. @Sparkstar1412

Birchpaw; pure ginger she-cat with blue eyes. @Blaze1266

Jaggedpaw; brown fur with darker small spots, dark brown eyes, tom, Birchpaw and Sparkpaw's brother. @spedsarah

Greypaw; grey tom with lighter belly and legs, blue eyes. @Scarlletepix369

Acornpaw; black with brown stripes, green eyes, tom. @eaglepaw54

Queens-

Snowfern; grey with white patches and green eyes, she-cat. @XxDawnfurxX **Dreamkit**; pale grey she-kit with green eyes, @biddy505 **Rosekit**; dark ginger she-kit with yellow eyes, white paws and under belly, **Thunderkit**; fluffy brown tom with green eyes.

Darkshine; grey she-cat with black paws and belly, amber eyes. **Clawkit**; Dark grey tom with lighter belly, chest, and paws, amber eyes. @LeAzzy

Ripplecurrent; orange tabby with amber eyes, she-cat. Expecting.

Elders-

Willowfrost; lilac tabby, green eyes, she-cat. Former medicine cat. @xScribex

Briarleaf; fluffy redish-brown she-cat with green eyes, Blossomfrost's mother.

***

StreamClan:

Leader-

Seastar; blueish-grey she-cat with dark blue eyes, white tail tip. @KittyPineglade716

Deputy-

Wildflower; white calico she-cat with amber eyes. @_Whitestar_

Medicine Cat-

Lightfeather; cream she-cat with one white paw, dark yellow eyes. @Yellowwolf56 Apprentice- **Smokepaw**; grey tabby tom with a blue tint, dark blue eyes and barely noticeable scars, Sootpaw and Lilypaw's brother. @chromeflame

Warriors-

Nightshade; black with dark grey paws, yellow eyes, she-cat. @xxRainStarxx Apprentice- Lilypaw

Skullsong; black she-cat with white tabby markings, amber eyes. @Crowfrost

Wolftail; large black and brown patched tom, hazel eyes,

Loudbird's mate, Skullsong and Nightshade's brother. @Fanlord1987

Spottedfire; white she-cat with orange hindquarters, three orange stripes on her chest, yellow eyes, Lightfeather and Wildflower's sister. @amberstorm Apprentice- Sootpaw

Rowantail; semi-long dark ginger fur, she-cat with a plump tail and white tail tip. @Rainingsouls Apprentice- Flamepaw

Dawnflower; long light ginger fur, black spots around her blue eyes, she-cat, Rowantail's sister and Flamepaw and Amberpaw's mother. @Jamie_The_Hedgehog

Ivysplash; dark grey pelt with light grey legs, ears, and tail, yellow eyes, she-cat. @icefeather57

Whitefeather; white tom, right yellow eye and left blue eye, Ivysplash's brother. @Kerosene_X

Ghostglow; white tom with glowing yellow eyes, Whitefeather and Ivysplash's father. Apprentice- Amberpaw

Twistedsoul; dark brown tom with a few black speckles here and there, green eyes, left front paw has a white sock while the rest have black socks, one back paw is twisted slightly, Blackwind's brother. @Coldfrost

Crescentmoon; black with blue eyes, she-cat. @hollyleaf517

Apprentices-

Amberpaw; small red-brown she-cat with darker stripes on her tail, amber eyes. @jelwolf

Flamepaw; ginger tom with white paws and underbelly, dark amber eyes, Amberpaw's brother.

Lilypaw; white with cream patches, ears, and paws, she-cat. @_lilyBreeze_

Sootpaw; light grey fur with darker stripes and tail, yellow eyes,

tom. @cerealisgood

Queens-

Moonfur; muscular light grey she-cat, bright blue eyes. Expecting. @bubblefox

Blackwind; jet black, light green eyes, she-cat. @SilentFlash **Whisperkit**; silver tabby she-cat, amber eyes, **Thornkit**; black tom, white underbelly, green eyes.

Loudbird; tabby she-cat with green eyes. @Crookedstar60 **Chipkit**; brown tom with black ears.

Elders-

Mistfire; slender silver tabby with sapphire blue eyes, white underbelly, paws, and tail tip, Moonfur's mother. @StarShiner

Troutriver; black-and-white tom with hollow yellow eyes, Skullsong, Wolftail, and Nightshade's father.

***

Cats Outside the Clans:

Lark; black with grey markings and many scars, crystal blue eyes, tom. @Pastel_Ice

Firefly; white she-cat with pearl green eyes.

Misty; grey-and-white she-cat with dark blue eyes. @Yellowfangfanforever

Foxtail; dark ginger she-cat with a fluffy tail, white tail tip, yellow eyes. @Starry-Mint

Chapter One

[image]

There is no main character. It took me a long time to come to that decision xD There will be pov's to characters other than my OC's by the way!

RockClan's territory is in the photo! It may seem like they have like no territory but there's a whole lot in behind that I couldn't get a photo for.

***

Blossomfrost's POV

It was a hot day; the blistering sun beating on the rocky camps' ground. We hadn't had rain in what seemed to be moons, but was more like a quarter-moon. The heat didn't seem to effect the overly-joyed apprentices as they bounded around the camp, chasing one another, but it sure did affect the warriors.

I sat in the crowd of panting warriors as Silverfeather - our deputy - organized patrols. "Why do we even have to go out? No prey would *dare* come out in this heat," Softpelt grunted, rolling her grey eyes.

"Even in this heat, we all know the patrols need to be organized. So quit your moaning and be quiet!" She hissed. Softpelt rolled her eyes again and slouched her shoulders.

"Coldwish, take Greypaw and Tigerstripe to the edge of our territory, by the singular tree. Make sure to get rid of the foxes if they're still hanging around." Silverfeather ordered. The three set off without saying anything. "Whitefire take Skystorm and your apprentices further up the river. Check the borders as well as hunt." Whitefire and Skystorm padded out of the camp with Jaggedpaw and Birchpaw hopping after them. "Maybe we'll meet some of those rogues I smelt last time!" Jaggedpaw snarled. Birchpaw said nothing, just followed after her anxious brother.

I looked over to Cindersong and Shadowpaw as they began to lay out herbs. "Now, tell me which are which." Cindersong ordered. Shadowpaw gave her a look from the corner of her eyes and muttered, "Shouldn't *you* know their names?" Cindersong flicked her fluffy grey tail over the sarcastic she-cats ear.

"You know why!" She purred.

"-and Blossomfrost." Silverfeather meowed. I was semi-shocked as I heard my name. Stormcloud, Acornpaw, and Oakshadow padded to the entrance without saying a word. Oakshadow had to hurry to say goodbye to his kits. He must've been playing with them. Stormcloud's sweet look from cuddling with his mate, Ripplecurrent, had faded as soon as he left her side. Only Ripplecurrent seen the good side of him.

I scurried to catch up to the patrol.

"Aren't we lucky? Going to StreamClan's border!" Oakshadow retorted. "If only we were aloud to go in the river beside out camp." Stormcloud's hissed. Acornpaw nodded in agreement. We weren't aloud to go in the river near the waterfall in our camp. Last time someone did that, they fell down the waterfall and was never found. It was said to be only a nursery-tale, though.

***

We didn't have to travel far to get to the Gathering Place, which was also known as the border between StreamClan and RockClan. We halted at the large log that marked the half point in the Gathering Place, where the smell was strongest. Even in Gatherings, the Clans didn't cross the borders to see each other.

"If any StreamClan fish-faces come near our territory line, I'll shred them to pieces!" Acornpaw boasted, puffing out his chest. "No, you won't. Only if they cross into our territory," Stormcloud corrected, flicking his ear with his tail. The apprentice rolled his eyes and marked the territory without any other comments.

And, just to our luck, a patrol of StreamClan cats neared the border. Acornpaw's fur spiked up and a growl crawled up his throat. "Calm

yourself, Acornpaw." Stormcloud hissed. As Oakshadow, Stormcloud, and I marked our territory line, Acornpaw just couldn't keep his mouth shut.

"Hey fish-faces!" Acornpaw growled when the StreamClan patrol neared. "Why don't you go back to your pond and swim with your kind?" Stormcloud narrowed his eyes and lashed his tail in anger. "Acornpaw! What did I *just* tell you?"

The patrol stopped and stared at the cats. Acornpaw instantly regretted what he said. Wildflower, the StreamClan deputy, was among them. The she-cat unsheathed her claws. "Is that a challenge, young warrior?" Acornpaw opened his mouth to speak, but Stormcloud stepped in front of him. "Please excuse him, Wildflower. He doesn't know what he's talking about." The warrior said with an even tone. The StreamClan patrol looked agitated but said nothing more.

As Oakshadow lead the patrol away, Stormcloud turned towards his apprentice, his eyes burning with rage. "Were you trying to get us killed? You don't challenge a patrol unless they're on our territory!" Acornpaw didn't look at his mentor. "Sorry." He mumbled, staring at his paws.

Stormcloud closed his eyes for a moment, warning his apprentice, "If you try anything like that again, I'm going to have to report it to Marshstar." Acornpaw nodded. "Yes, Stormcloud."

We headed back to the camp quietly, Oakshadow leading the patrol. The wind picked up, a hot gust of sandy wind hitting our faces and stinging our eyes as we padded down the hill to our camp. We entered the camp and - with a bored sigh - waited to be sent out of the camp for another meaningless patrol.

***

A/N:

Sorry if this was a tad boring. Next will be someone's POV in StreamClan. The whole nuke shiz will happen in chapter three so you can get to know the cats and stuff more.

Stay tuned warrior fans hehe Cx

P_A83 out!

Chapter Two

[image]

Flamepaw's POV

I jolted awake as a nudge in my shoulder woke me from my deep slumber. Turns out, it was already morning. No apprentices were in the den other then me, and I felt suddenly very embarrassed. "Hurry up. Wildflower is going to start making patrols!" Rowantail sneered, backing back out of the apprentice den.

Without commenting, I scurried out of the den with matted fur and twisted whiskers. Drowsily, I wobbled over to where my sister, Amberpaw, sat. She was wide awake and cleaned up. She looked ready for the day. The reddish she-cat was waiting quietly and patiently for Wildflower to come from her meeting with Seastar.

I cleaned up my thick russet pelt until it was satisfyingly clean. For me, at least. Amberpaw... not so much. My sister leaned over and licked down a part I hadn't been able to reach and dipped her small head. "There you go," she purred. I nodded my head to her with a smile.

I watched as Wolftail played around with his small tabby son. "I'm a RockClan intruder!" Wolftail growled playfully, stomping around Chipkit as he purred loudly. The tabby tom jumped at his fathers' side and clawed his way up onto his back, nibbling on Wolftail's ears.

"Be careful you two!" Loudbird snapped from where she laid in the sun. Her eyes were narrowed. "He'll be fine, Loudbird!" Wolftail reassured with his whiskers twitching in amusement. "Chipkit will be the finest and bravest warrior ever; don't worry, he can handle anything!" Wolftail purred.

"No he *can't*. He's a kit! Don't be so rough." Loudbird growled.

Wolftail didn't reply, just kept playing with Chipkit. "*I'll* be the best

warrior!" Thornkit boasted, puffing out his chest. "No way! *I* will!" Whisperkit growled, leaping onto Thornkit. They tumbled around even as Wildflower stepped away from Seastar. I felt an urge to jump in and fight with them as well, but I was an apprentice now! I had to be serious!

"Spottedfire, Nightshade, bring your apprentices on a patrol to the singular tree that marks our territory." Wildflower began, and immediately the four of them set off. "Ivysplash, take Dawnflower and Twistedsoul to the waterfalls' pool to fish." Dawnflower nuzzled Amberpaw as she left in a hurry.

"Make the Clan proud, you two," she whispered before leaving. She always said that, making our day brighter.

The three cats seemed very relieved to be going near water as they hurried out of the camp. Twistedsoul was a bit slower than the others; with a permanent twisted ankle, it took more effort to run than it should.

"Ghostglow, Rowantail, take your apprentices and go to the other side of the river near The Drop. Be careful around the waterfall," Wildflower ordered. "I will go with Skullsong, Whitefeather, and Wolftail to RockClan's border in the Gathering Place."

Mistfire called the three kits to her as Chipkit's father said his goodbyes to him and his mate. "Let me tell you the time when I caught a fish bigger than three cats!" She meowed happily. As we left, Lightfeather followed us in a rush. "Can I come?" I heard Smokepaw, her eager apprentice, ask.

"No!" Lightfeather gasped. She looked panicked and in a major hurry to go somewhere. *I don't think the herbs will die that quickly...* "N-no, I'm getting herbs. I'll be back soon. Name the er... herbs while I'm gone." She called over her shoulder as she headed out of the camp.

I shook off her odd manor and followed behind a flirtatious Rowantail and an impatient Ghostglow. Amberpaw was silent and content while I was excited to just get into the cool water.
***

Rowantail floated in the water majestically, paddling up and down the river with a confident look on her face. Ghostglow looked unsatisfied, knowing Rowantail wanted him to look at her. The dark ginger she-cat got out of the river and shook out her pelt. When Ghostglow just walked past her, a look of frustration came over her in a heartbeat. "I'm crossing the river to catch prey. Amberpaw, let's go," Ghostglow grunted as he walked into the water. Amberpaw waited for me to follow, her paw raised near the waters edge and her eyes meeting me from over her shoulder.

"Flamepaw, you can stay there and watch your idiotic mentor if you'd like." Ghostglow called from the center of the river. Rowantail gasped in shock and anger, but didn't comment.

I didn't answer either, just nodded and joined Amberpaw's mentor as he climbed onto the other side of the river. The waterfall loudly roared beside us, echoing in the cave where the waterfall created an unseen pool. It had to have been a fourty-fox-length fall. Nursery tales were made to scare the apprentices away from the edge, saying that a couple of apprentices got to close and fell in. They were never seen again.

Some of the apprentices say if you listen hard enough, you can still hear the desperate cries of the dead apprentices as they beg for help.

It was only a nursery tale, though. No one *really* took it seriously.

I climbed into the ground again, pelt dripping, just as Amberpaw hit the mid-river section. I waited for her to climb up before I left the shore. I was glad my pelt was cooled down, even though in mere heartbeats it was warm and half-dry.

"Amberpaw, sniff around. Do you smell anything?" Ghostglow asked, sitting beside the gorge's wall. I padded up quietly beside Amberpaw's mentor. "Join her. I don't think Rowantail is coming over here anytime soon," Ghostglow insisted. I nodded after glancing over the river. Rowantail was watching the water swirl by, searching for any fish that would fall under her wrath.

For a cat who wanted so many toms, you'd think she would have a mate

by now...

***

Sorry if it was boring and short, again. The next chapter will be up soon! Yes, there will be the bombing. Yes, there will be death. And yes, there will be grief.
P_A83 out!

Chapter Three

[image]

Jaggedpaw's POV

I woke up to a sharp prod in my side and as I opened my eyes, I realized it was my dedicated mentor, Skystorm. She had a sweet and kind look on her face. *Did I sleep in?* I wondered. "Come on, we're going on a patrol to see StreamClan's border." I hopped up immediately and squeezed past the she-cat, excited to protect my territory.

"Who are we with?" I asked Skystorm as she padded after me. I waited by the entrance as my mentor took her time to catch up. "Coldwish and Greypaw." I nodded just as the two toms joined us. Coldwish took the lead while Greypaw and I hopped around the patrol, excited.

"I bet those fish-faces are going to cause trouble! If they do I'm going to claw their ears off and-" I started, stopping to claw at the air, but Skystorm interrupted me before I could get into any *real* detail. "You will do no such thing unless I give you my say so." She advised. I groaned and hurried to catch up.

"I bet they have gills like fish," Greypaw murmured to me quietly. I purred, "I bet when they touch the water, their tails turn into fish tails!" Greypaw nodded and purred so loud, it could cause an earthquake.

"Race you to the log!" Greypaw meowed, dashing off. "No fair!" I yowled at him, pelting after his fluffy grey tail. The rocks stabbed at my pads but I didn't care. My heart raced as fast as a rabbit could flee, the adrenaline pumping through my blood. I closed my eyes as I tore up the small hill up to the Gathering Place and without knowing it, I hit the log and flew onto StreamClans side.

Just as Greypaw halted at the log, Skystorm and Coldwish padded calmly up the Gathering Places' path. I scampered to my paws.

Just as I put my paws on the log to hop over, I watched a huge black bird fly across the clear blue sky. I watched it go with my head tilted to the side. It went down toward the ground the farther it went past our camp.

I looked away to find my paws just as an ear-ringing, spine-tingling gust of wind smashed into the patrol, blowing us all off of our feet. Just as sand hit my eyes, I seen Coldwish leap at Greypaw. He landed on the apprentice and held onto the ground with a death grip.

I held onto the log while the wind blew it back. Something tumbled into the log and I realized it was my mentor as her body flew to the edge. "Jaggedpaw! Jaggedpaw, help me!" She screeched. My heart pounded and my head throbbed as the hot wind blew sand and a rancid air into my lungs.

I tried to stand to go toward Skystorm, but rocks and sand shoved me onto the ground. "Help me! Someone help me!" Skystorm screamed as loudly as she could, but as hard as I tried, I couldn't get to her.

With an ear-splitting screech, my sweet mentors' paws disappeared with a trail of claw marks, the only thing to prove she was once there.

I looked up to see the remnants of a mushroom-looking deadly grey cloud. The wind stopped suddenly and - with shaky legs and a grief-stricken mewl - I padded up to the edge. Skystorm's pale ginger pelt was no where to be found. The water that must've consumed her was all waves, hitting StreamClan's camp.
***
I sat by the river at the edge of our camp alone as the stars shone in the dark blue sky. I looked up to the clear sky and searched for a new star, one that would mean Skystorm was okay now. "I hope SoulClan is treating you well." I whispered. All joy from my sarcastic voice was gone.

"Are you alright? You know it's not your fault, right?" Birchpaw mewed, sitting down beside me. I looked to my paws and sighed. "I should've tried harder to help her."

"That wind blew everything and everyone to the ground. It would've been impossible, Jaggedpaw. It wasn't your fault." My sister whispered. I looked over at her, my eyes glazed with grief.

"Take a drink of water and go see Cindersong. I'm sure she'll give you something to help you sleep," Birchpaw murmured, nudging me softly. She took a few laps at the water as I did the same before hurrying off to the apprentices den.
***
I woke up to a horrible belly cramp. *Did those poppy seeds do something to my belly?* I wondered, staggering out of the den. I heaved up earlier that days' meal. Specks of blood were in it. I groaned in pain as I started to dry heave. Only saliva came out as I had thrown up everything I had eaten.

Birchpaw pelted out of the den and into the dirtplace tunnel. I could hear her throwing up as well. *It was something in the water...* I realized as the pain grew more and more until it was so much that I passed out cold.

Chapter Four

Jayfall -> @Jaysrock96
***

Nightshade's POV

Wildflower sat cleaning herself outside the warriors den as the sun slid up the pink sky. I was already up before everyone else, ready for the lazy warriors to get up. I sighed and laid down. I watched as Wolftail hurried out of the warriors den and into the nursery. He hadn't even cleaned himself yet. A pleased yowl came from his kit. *That kit means the world to him. It's a shame he had lost Bramblekit.*

As Seastar stretched just outside of her den, Ghostglow went into the apprentices den to get his apprentice. Amberpaw and Lilypaw appeared, drowsily padding to the side of the camp. I stood up and padded over to the apprentice.

"I've noticed you're lacking in stalking quietly. So we'll be practicing *a lot* so you can perfect it," I meowed. She nodded with a small smile on her face.

I padded up to Wildflower just as she was going to start announcing patrols. "Could I take Lilypaw somewhere to practice hunting?" I murmured. The calico deputy nodded. "You'll be bringing a few others, but yes." I bowed my head and padded over to Lilypaw.

"Eat something before we leave. I already did, so I'm just waiting on you." Lilypaw nodded and went to the fresh-kill pile to get something.

"Ghostglow, take Amberpaw and Skullsong out behind the Gathering Place to hunt and check for foxes." Wildflower announced. "I will go with you," Seastar announced, padding in behind the three cats. "Do you want to lead?" Ghostglow suggested. He gestured with his tail for her to go in front. Seastar shook her head then they set off.

"Whitefeather, you'll take a patrol to the river near the waterfalls' pool. Wolftail, Spottedfire, Sootpaw, you'll tag along," Announced Wildflower.

Wolftail said his farewells to his kit and mate and joined the patrol just as they set out. Chipkit looked sad as he appeared out of the den. "Hey, Chipkit!" A mew called from the nursery. "Come play mossball with us!" Chipkit's ears perked up in excitement as he dashed back into the nursery.

I barely listened to Wildflower as she spoke, watching Moonfur lay down slowly and quietly, her belly swollen. *Poor Moonfur,* I thought, blinking as I watched her curl up on her own. She had lost her mate, Jayfall, to a deadly RockClan battle over whether or not those rabbit-chasers had invaded or not.

She was always passionate and shy, but now she was just plain silent and depressed. Her kits were all she had left to remind her of her beloved mate.

Wildflower headed out with Dawnflower, Rowantail, and Flamepaw as Lilypaw prodded me. "Come on, Twistedsoul, Ivysplash, and Crescentmoon are waiting for us." Lilypaw headed off quickly to where the injured brown warrior and the pure black she-cat waited. Sighing, I padded into the rear of the patrol.

It didn't take very long to trot to the edge of the water. "Wildflower said we should go across the river to hunt," Twistedsoul informed me as we halted at the shore. "Race you to the other side, Lilypaw!" Ivysplash purred. The dark grey she-cat leaped into the water and bobbed to the surface. Lilypaw waded into the river and paddled to her side. Twistedsoul and Crescentmoon jumped in right after with me following behind.

Ivysplash ended up winning, quietly dancing around like a kit. "I won!" She purred. Lilypaw rolled her eyes but she did look amused. I climbed onto the shore while Crescentmoon stayed by Twistedsoul. "I can swim perfectly *fine*." He growled once he touched ground.

"I was just being cautious..." Crescentmoon murmured. We all shook

out our pelts, droplets of water spraying everywhere. The sun was almost up fully with no clouds to cover the blue sky.

I bowed my head to the other warriors. "You guys go ahead and hunt. Lilypaw and I will be practicing stalking." The others nodded and set off, the rocks clanging as they scraped against each other. "Alright. Get into the stalking position." I ordered.

Lilypaw got down, her belly touching the ground and her tail a tad too high. I pushed up from under her stomach with a gentle paw and then I pushed her fluffy tail down a bit. "Now go from here to that bush." She didn't comment, only stalked away. It was only a tail-length or two from the shoreline to the bush.

She didn't make too much noise, but she did seem too tense. Lilypaw stood up. "Did I do well?" "Try again," I mewed. Agitated, she got back down and stalked to the shore quietly. "Again."

Just as she got back down into the position, she cocked her head to the side. "What a strangely shaped bird..." Lilypaw muttered. My ear twitched. Looking to where her gaze rested on, I realized how oddly the black bird looked and how it flew. "Odd... Continue." I meowed, shooting a glance at my apprentice.

She stalked to the bush again and just as she opened her mouth to complain, a huge crash sounded from above. My pelt stood up as I ducked down, eyes wide and ears flat to my skull. A mushroom shaped dark cloud formed far away, with a ring of another dark cloud dispatching away from the mushroom.

"That wasn't a bird! Get down!" I screamed. The patrol stopped what they were doing and huddled near the ground.

A patrol of RockClan warriors must've been checking the Gathering Place because I noticed a small object clinging to the side of the rock. "Oh my SoulClan," I whispered. The cat didn't stay there long; it soon slipped from the edge and fell to it's death, hitting the water right beside the shore where Whitefeather's patrol was.

"Wave! Get to high ground!" Crescentmoon yowled desperately, leaping for Twistedsoul who was closer to the shore. *Wave?*

My thoughts were cut short as a huge wave of water came down from the waterfall, followed by many more in the pool. More waves formed. My eyes widened even more as the water flooded halfway up the ground we were on. Twistedsoul backed away from the waves just in time.

Larger waves came from the waterfall, this time coming down on all of us. It slapped down on us merciless, dragging us out into the river. With my mouth squeezed shut, I tumbled through the water. My shoulder hit the ground, threatening to let my air out in pain. Already, my lungs wanted more air as I was tossed through the water. The current started to push me downriver so I clawed desperately at the water, but I couldn't break the surface.

I started to flail in the water; my chest was aching greatly. My shoulder throbbed in pain from hitting the ground so harshly. Thankfully, my head broke the surface of the water. I took in all the air I could as I splashed over to the camps' side of the river. Twistedsoul and Lilypaw laid on the shore. Crescentmoon stood in between the two. Ivysplash was no where to be found.

I coughed and coughed until my throat stung, gasping for air in between. Even with vibrating legs, I ran over to Lilypaw's side. "Where's... Where's Ivysplash?" Crescentmoon panted. I ignored her question. I pushed down on the apprentices chest. Water trickled from her jaws. "I... can't... lose you!" I snarled through clenched teeth, pushing down on her delicate chest. She opened her eyes suddenly and coughed up water in my face.

"Maybe we should practice swimming," I purred in relief as she stood up to cough up the rest of the water. I looked over to find Crescentmoon trying to get Twistedsoul awake. He didn't so much as twitch. He was dangerously still. I looked around in search of Ivysplash but she was no where to be found. "Help! Help me!" A yowl came from the far end of the river.

Without thinking, I bolted to the cave-waterfall. "Hold on!" I screeched to Ivysplash. Her waterlogged grey head bobbed with wide yellow eyes ready to pop out of their sockets. She swam against the current as it pushed her to the edge. I went in the water as far as I could and reached out with parted jaws. She was too far

over to the opposite side.

"Come to me!" I yelled. She swam sideways toward me, but the closer she came to me, the farther down river she went. "Noo!" I craned my neck as far as it would go but she just kept going backwards. She was growing tired.

Backing away, I looked around for a stick. *Stick... stick...* I thought, breathing heavily. I grabbed a branch from a bush and jumped at the water. I went as far in and down the shoreline as I could. Ivysplash just couldn't reach it.

"Tell Whitefeather that I love him!" She yowled as she let the current cast her away. She let out a bloodcurdling cry as the nursery tale came true.

Chapter Five

Cindersong's POV

The dim den I worked in was hot and stuffy. I was practically suffocating due to the weird bird that caused Skystorm to fall to her death. With a damp pelt, wide eyes, and panicked breaths, I fumbled through the herbs in a rush. Coldwish was wheezing loudly. Though he was fast asleep thanks to the poppyseeds, he still seemed to be in pain.

It was my fault... I thought as I searched desperately for coltsfoot. *If only I had told Marshstar, maybe we would've been prepared.*

I stopped what I was doing and I glanced over at Coldwish's twitching body. His silver pelt was greatly damaged from the toxic hot air that had burned his pelt so badly, it singed. He wouldn't have fur in those patches for moons if he survived the night. I had guessed Greypaw wouldn't be able to sleep so I fed him poppyseeds as well as thyme.

I ducked down to look under a ledge and there was the coltsfoot. Sighing in relief, I carefully pulled it out with a sheathed paw and chewed it up. I laid it on an ivy leaf and nudged Coldwish awake quietly with my muzzle.

"Eat this. It'll help your breathing," I whispered kindly, trying not to wake Shadowpaw. His blue eyes were glassy as he groggily licked up the pulp. Coldwish's head hit the nest with a thump and a moan.

Satisfied that he'd breathe better, I cleaned up my mess and settled into my nest beside Shadowpaw. I nuzzled my nose under my fluffy tail and soon I was asleep.
***
My ears perked up to the sound of a cat in distress. *Coldwish?* I sat up in fright, my eyes immediately resting on the silver tom. He was in his nest. I couldn't hear him rasping, which I took as a good thing... Until I padded up to him to find he wasn't breathing at all.

I started to take in shallow breaths, my fur spiking up. "No, no!"

But Coldwish didn't wake as I prodded him again and again. I heard some cat puking. With a lump of grief lodged in my throat, I ducked out of the den wearily to see Jaggedpaw laying beside his puke. I rushed over to him. "Did you eat crowfood?" I growled, not expecting an answer.

Birchpaw stumbled out of the dirtplace tunnel, drool dripping from her jaws. She looked up to me with pain glazed in her blue eyes and shook her head.

I noticed there were dark specks of blood in Jaggedpaw's puke. "We drank water and this happened..." The ginger apprentice whimpered softly.

"Wait here!" I ordered, pelting into the medicine den. I tore through the herbs, looking for willow leaves and watermint. *The one time I need these herbs and I can't find them!* I did find them after panicked heartbeats of searching, and after ripping them from their pile, I dashed back out. Rocks flew over the apprentices limp bodies as I halted.

I checked to see if they were breathing. Jaggedpaw was but to my horror, Birchpaw was completely still. *Help Jaggedpaw, don't panic.* I thought. I breathed in then breathed out slowly.

I nudged Jaggedpaw softly. His eyes opened, but they weren't the odd dark brown color they used to be. My ears went back in confusion as I realized they were glassy and white. Jaggedpaw groaned and clawed toward me. My gut told me to flee.

"Jaggedpaw? Eat these willow leaves, they'll-" I mewed but he didn't respond with words. I stopped as he reached out with open jaws and clamped his teeth around my ankle. Yelping, I bounced back in shock and fear.

"Jaggedpaw!" I yowled as I tried to free my leg from his grip. "Jaggedpaw, what in SoulClan's name is *wrong* with you?"

Jaggedpaw didn't reply. "What's going on?" A voice asked from

behind me. I turned around to see Shadowpaw padding out of the medicine den. I could feel the blood dripping from the wound. I looked down at my ankle just as Jaggedpaw stood up. He stumbled towards me with spit and blood dripping from his mouth. The only thing I could get from deep within his milky white eyes, was that he was hungry. Hungry for flesh.

Birchpaw woke as well just as I heard more moaning from behind me again. "Coldwish! You look... hungry?" Shadowpaw muttered, cringing away from the silver tom as he slowly staggered toward the apprentice. "Watch out!" I called to him. The dark apprentice bolted away. I realized my voice seemed to call Coldwish toward me.

I felt teeth grab onto my front leg and then another on my flank. I yowled in pain. I whipped around and shoved the apprentices off. "Cindersong!" Shadowpaw whimpered as another cat began to maul on me. I kicked with my back legs and ran toward the river to get rid of the flesh-craving cats.

My wounds stung more than any wound I had ever encountered. I left a blood trail that led the cats straight toward me. Cats started to come out of their dens, Clawkit included. He dashed out and growled at the cats. "Hey! Stop being mean! We're your Clanmates!" Clawkit yowled, his fur spiked up.

"Clawkit, no!" Willowfrost snapped, running over to the kit. Coldwish had already turned around and was in front of Clawkit. Willowfrost blocked Coldwish away from the tiny kit. Coldwish latched onto the elders shoulder. Blood squirted from her wound, spraying all over the ground and onto Clawkit's face.

Clawkit yowled in disgust and backed away, whipping his eyes and spitting out the fluid. Darkshine popped her head out. Birchpaw and Jaggedpaw stumbled toward me fast. They reached for me but as they came at me, I pushed them into the river.

My breathing was shallow and fast, and my head was hot as if I was going to faint. The amount of blood I had lost was immense. "Get rid of Coldwish, Clawkit, Willowfrost, and I..." I ordered. My gut sudden churned and I let out not just prey, but a great amount of

blood as well.

***

Hallo everyone. Sorry if this chapter is too long and boring xD
Sorry if you guys are angry that your character had died. Hope you enjoyed! I'll try to get Chapter Six out soon!
P_A83 out!

Chapter Six

Whisperecho -> @TheAJWolffey02
***

Whitefeather's POV

The sun was setting as Ghostglow and Nightshade sat beside me silently, grieving for our loss of Ivysplash. Usually I would be out doing something *useful*, like hunting or keeping those rabbit-chasers away, but this was personal. When my mother, Whisperecho, had died, I didn't even attend her burial. I was hunting for the Clan. But my sister and I were close, closer than I was to Ghostglow and Whisperecho.

I sighed. *Did Nightshade even try to save my sister? Why is that filth sitting next to my father and I? She should be exiled. I wish I had been there. I would've saved my bubbly sister.*

I looked up to the purple sky. A few white stars shone in the black, endless sky. I noticed the biggest one was twinkling in plain view. *I bet that's her. I will never forget you, Ivysplash. I will* never *forgive Nightshade, either*. I vowed.

Crescentmoon and Blackwind sat on both sides of Twistedsoul's body, his carcass reeking of rosemary. Since everyone else's eyes were closed, I noticed no one else flinched when Twistedsoul's bad leg twitched. My ear twitched. *My eyes are playing tricks on me.* I guessed.

I could hear Skullsong coughing and gagging from where she laid with her brother, Wolftail. They both were eating a minnow. I could tell her cough was wet and deep in her lungs.

I watched Twistedsoul's body twitch and kick until I had had enough. No one seemed to notice and it bugged me. Standing up, I traveled away from my father and Nightshade until I stood by Twistedsoul's body. His eyes were open, glowing white eyes looking

up until they laid on me. I gulped as Crescentmoon and Blackwind looked up at me with shame.

"You're supposed to be sitting vigil," They growled in sync. I didn't answer, only glanced down at the cat. I backed away as the brown tom started to stand. His legs were shaky and he seemed to have a hard time moving. Twistedsoul groaned and took a few paw steps toward me.

He groaned again, snapping his jaws at me. I gulped. My gut churned nervously. "Twistedsoul? Twistedsoul, you're- you're alive!" Crescentmoon breathed. The tom reeked of death as he gained speed, dragging his permanently injured leg behind him. Twistedsoul let out a loud and long moan.

"I-I don't think that's Twistedsoul," I snarled, unsheathing my claws. "No! Leave him be, he must be confused!" Crescentmoon insisted, running in front of him. Twistedsoul's white eyes laid on the black she-cat. He opened his jaws as if he were to be going to bite her, just as Lightfeather shoved her out of the way.

The two she-cats tumbled to a stop a tail-length away from Twistedsoul. The tom stumbled forward and turned to go after the black she-cat. "What in SoulClan's name is *wrong* with you?" Crescentmoon screamed, shoving the medicine cat off of her. "You should be happy he's alive!"

"Don't you think it's a bit..." Skullsong paused, lashing her tail, "-ironic and unlikely for a cat to come back to life after being dead for so long?" Skullsong mumbled, lashing her tail in annoyance with her eyes narrowed. *She doesn't care about anyone in StreamClan other than herself, for SoulClan's sake!*

"You don't get it! You'll all die from his bite!" Lightfeather pleaded, "Push him in the river before he attacks us! Push him in the river!"

"Maybe we should just push *you* in the river?" Rowantail suggested calmly and slowly with a "too good for you" look on her face.

Seastar had had enough of the commotion toward her medicine den. "Enough! All of you!" Seastar yelled. Twistedsoul changed

directions, heading for the blue leader. Seastar's eyes widened and she backed away. Blackwind rushed up to her brother and nudged him from behind. Twistedsoul let out a moan and whipped around, snapping his jaws at her.

She scurried backwards in fear. "Twistedsoul! Stop that!" Blackwind hissed. "What's Twistedsoul doing, mommy?" Thornkit mewed with Whisperkit poking her head out behind him. "Go back to sleep you two!" Blackwind ordered.

The two kits didn't listen, just crouched down and examined their Clanmates with wide eyes.

Troutriver padded up to the tom and tapped him slightly. He seemed grouchy. "What's your deal, Twistedsoul?" Troutriver growled. Twistedsoul whipped around and clamped his jaws shut onto his neck. "Ahhh!! Help me! Someone get this freak off of me!" Troutriver rasped.

Gasps of shock rippled through the camp. The kits squealed in fear. Blackwind and Crescentmoon were horrified. Wolftail leaped up and smashed into the insane warrior. "What's wrong with you?!" He yowled, pinning him down. A chunk of Troutriver's throat was missing, pink flesh and dark blood showing. I gagged in disgust.

Twistedsoul only growled, snapping his bloody jaws at Wolftail's legs. "Don't let him bite you!" Lightfeather screeched. Wolftail hopped off of him. I glanced over at Troutriver. He was gurgling and gasping for air, blood pooling around his head as he had collapsed.

Smokepaw came from the medicine den with cobwebs. Lightfeather took the cobwebs from her apprentice and began to soak up the blood that leaked quickly from the elders neck.

Nightshade and Wolftail surrounded the tom with sorrow in their eyes. Skullsong just sat back with her chin on her paws. Wolftail, Nightshade, and Skullsong's father let out his last breath. I shook my head.

Wolftail's eyes changed drastically from pain to rage. "I'll kill you!"

He yowled, diving for Twistedsoul who was making his way to the carcass. Wolftail slashed and clawed at Twistedsoul's face but to his horror, it didn't affect him in the way he expected.

Lightfeather pushed the tom off and grabbed Twistedsoul by his scruff and dragged him into the river. Bubbles escaped to the surface but Twistedsoul didn't make an effort to swim or even get his head above the water. The current pushed the bobbing body away until it fell down into the cave where Ivysplash had fallen.

"No time for vigil! Say your goodbyes to Troutriver," Lightfeather meowed in a rush. "We're burying him *now*."

"Is Twistedsoul a bad cat?" Whisperkit whimpered. They were devestated. Blackwind changed the subject. "Hurry into your nests, little ones." She whispered.

Seastar nodded in agreement as everyone who liked the elder - including Skullsong - gathered to say their final farewells.

Chapter Seven

Whitefire's POV

Willowfrost laid at Cindersong's paws, barely breathing but alive. Cindersong had cobwebs wrapped around her flank, ankle, and upper leg. The blood had soaked through already and was trickling down her leg, but Cindersong was too busy with Willowfrost to notice.

Tigerstripe had dragged Coldwish into the river beside the camp to get rid of him. Out of embarrassment, confusion, and sadness, Blazeflame had stayed in the warriors den after her two precious kits had brutally mauled on Cindersong and Willowfrost. She didn't even pay attention to her poor grieving and confused daughter, Sparkpaw. Blazeflame was a bold, strong-willed young warrior, but the loss of her kits were too much for her to bare. Losing her mate right after she announced she was expecting was extremely hard to handle, but this... this was a lot.

Meanwhile, Cindersong had forced Clawkit to throw up, then she put juice in his eyes to clean them of the infected blood. He was now sleeping, but Darkshine was more awake than anyone.

I padded up to Willowfrost and stroked her flank with my tail calmly. Though she had passed out from sudden bloodloss, I thought it would help. "More goldenrod, Shadowpaw! And dried oak leaves!" Cindersong called to her apprentice. Shadowpaw - who was usually breathing sarcasm - hurried without a word to grab the herbs.

"What's the point, Cindersong, in trying to save Willowfrost? You seen what happened to Coldwish-" Tigerstripe growled, flicking his ear. The dark tom looked quite annoyed. "Tigerstripe, don't be so rude." Blossomfrost nudged him softly, her white ears back and her green eyes narrowed to a slit.

He rolled his eyes and looked away, not meeting her gaze.

Cindersong didn't even answer, just frantically patched up Willowfrost's wound. Cindersong's whiskers were twisted and her eyes were twitching. "Cindersong?" Darkshine wimpered, "Will Clawkit be okay?"

Cindersong paused. She kept her head down and didn't look up. Her ear flicked after several heartbeats of silence and then she kept working. "I'm sure he will be okay." I reassured the queen. She gave me a worried look but didn't comment.

"Let's just throw Willowfrost in the river already. She won't survive." Softpelt muttered from where she laid, her tail tip trembling. "You don't know that!" Cindersong yelled, looking the pure white she-cat dead in the eye. Her eye twitched several times. Every cat watched her intensely.

"You don't know that..." She rasped to herself after she looked back down at Willowfrost.

Cindersong is usually so calm and reassuring and positive. Something is on her mind. But what is it? I wondered, cocking my head to the side.

"Everyone leave Cindersong to her work. I want patrols to go hunting," Marshstar ordered. I turned my head as I heard small mews come from the nursery. "Snowfern, is Clawkit going to be okay? He keeps fidgeting and moaning in his sleep!" Thunderkit asked. Rosekit and Dreamkit nodded as well. Snowfern scooted them back into the den carefully.

"He will be fine, I'm sure. Now go into your nests." Snowfern meowed. The kits groaned in protest but they seemed to do as they were told. My sisters kits were beautiful, as well as her. Dreamkit was a special kit; she was small and quiet while Rosekit and Thunderkit were loud and playful.

"Will my kit be okay?" Darkshine pleaded. When Cindersong didn't reply, the queen started to panic. "Cindersong? Will Clawkit be okay? Will he?" She asked, her voice growing louder. Ripplecurrent rushed over, her swollen belly swaying.

"Stop it. She has *too much* on her mind, Darkshine." Ripplecurrent

snapped. "Tell me Clawkit will be okay! Tell me, Cindersong!" Darkshine yowled. Crowflight and Stormcloud hurried over to calm the queen as my sister popped her head out of the nursery again.

I backed away from the loud and desperate queen as she started to whimper. Stormcloud and Crowflight led her to the nursery with Ripplecurrent hurrying after. I turned around, and not even a heartbeat went by when I heard Cindersong collapse.

I whipped around and leaped over Willowfrost's limp body. She wasn't breathing. "Shadowpaw! Come quick!" I yowled to the apprentice. She poked her head out of the den and rushed over, her pelt reeking of sweet and fragrant herbs. "What happened?" She gasped. Shadowpaw laid her head onto her mentors chest for heartbeats upon heartbeats, her face growing more frightened and devastated with every heartbeat Cindersong's heart didn't do.

"She's... dead," Shadowpaw stated quietly. "Not for long. Bury her before she comes back alive!" Tigerstripe insisted, standing away from the unmoving medicine cat. Shadowpaw ignored the rude tom as she checked on Willowfrost.

I nudged the medicine cat apprentice gently as I realized we had lost our retired medicine cat, Willowfrost, as well.

Silence ebbed around the camp. The only sound was the poisonous water as it streamed by. "Cats who are old enough to hunt, gather to hear my word." Marshstar meowed. His voice echoed through the empty and quiet land.

"Though we lost many beloved cats, we are still a Clan. We will still go on with our duties, we will still protect our territory, and keep our Clan strong and loyal," our leader began as we gathered around. "Shadowpaw, though you've lost your mentor early, I strongly believe you can take on the task of a *full* medicine cat. Do you promise to heal the sick and wounded until the day you die?"

Honour glittered in the she-cat's blue eyes. "I do," she replied.

"Then from this day forward, you will be known as Shadowflower." Marshstar finished, touching the medicine cats shoulder. Cats

cheered her new name quietly. Marshstar raised his tail for silence after a few cheers. "Bury Willowfrost and Cindersong. Keep an eye on Clawkit and Darkshine, too," He ordered.

"*No one* will die unless it's their time."

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A/N:
Thanks guys for all the reads and votes! It means so much to me <3 comment what you think if you'd like to! Have a good night and stay cool in school ;3
P_A83 out!

Chapter Eight

Dawnflower's POV

It had been a half-moon since Troutriver was buried. StreamClan was starving to death. All the prey had either died and was now poisonous, or had ran away. Now we were prey to the heat. Even the water looked poisonous. We prayed for rain and at least a mouse or a pigeon to be found.

The sun was already up fully; the sky was clear and there was only the hot wind that blew sand into our fur as we made it our mission to find prey. "I'm never going to get this sand out of my ear fur!" Sootpaw complained, shaking out his fluffy grey fur for the third time.

"Stop complaining, Sootpaw." Spottedfire growled. We padded around behind the Gathering Place, around the singular willow tree, but we couldn't smell anything due to the wind. I sighed and sniffed around anyway. The wind was blowing from RockClan's territory, making it easier to sniff something from the singular tree.

"I think I smell a mouse," I murmured, stalking toward the willow tree. My heart fluttered with hope. *This mouse will be fed to Flamepaw and Amberpaw. No one else. Flamepaw needs to eat...* He didn't have an appetite. Flamepaw's coughing had gone from bad to worse in only a few days. When he coughed, he coughed up blood, and I feared for my sons life.

I lashed my tail for the patrol to stay put as I crept toward the dying willow tree. I could see a hole under the trees' trunk; a perfect home for creatures to hide out. A mouse was chewing on a seed from a flower beside the trunk. I stalked over from the side. Leaping at the small brown mouse, I pinned it and killed it with a swift bite.

"Finally, something with meat inside it!" Sootpaw gasped, rushing over. Lilypaw, Nightshade, and Spottedfire took their time to come over. "Good catch," Spottedfire praised, bowing her head.

I dipped my head as Spottedfire turned around and lead the patrol away. As we padded away from the singular tree, Lilypaw got into the stalking position. She started to creep up on what looked to be a snake. It hissed at her.

We can give that to the elders or the queens. I thought as Nightshade surrounded it. The wind picked up just as Lilypaw leaped. The snake tried to attack her but she pounced on it before it could latch onto her fore-paw. "Nice one!" Nightshade praised as she examined it.

We hurried back to camp to share our catches with our Clanmates. Lilypaw's chin was raised high and her tail was straight up, proud of her kill. The snakes tail made a trail it's long body scrapped on the ground.

The wind went against us as if it was trying to keep us away from going home. Nothing was going to keep me away from nurturing my son.

I left the patrol with the mouse hanging in my jaws, speed walking into the camp. Without greeting anyone, I entered the medicine cat den and dropped the mouse at Amberpaw's feet. She sat beside Flamepaw, stroking his shoulders with drowsy eyes as he slept. *He's so cute when he sleeps.* I thought.

"Make sure when he wakes that he eats at least two bites from that mouse!" I ordered softly. Amberpaw nodded as I left.

Lilypaw stood in the center of the clearing with the snake at her paws with an anxious and puzzled look on her face. "What's wrong?" I asked as I halted in front of her.

"I can't decide if I should give this to Mistfire or the queens..." she muttered. "The queens can take herbs to eat, but Mistfire needs it more." I suggested. She hurried off to give the elderly she-cat a snake.

Lightfeather was surrounded by warriors, all asking for herbs so they wouldn't be hungry anymore. "Please, Lightfeather... I can barely walk because my chest and stomach hurt so much..."

Crescentmoon begged, her stomach sunken in. Wolftail shoved by the warriors, his eyes hollow. "Lightfeather, please. You have to have something for Loudbird! Chipkit can't take another day without her milk!" Wolftail whimpered.

"There isn't enough for all of you! Please, back up so I can-" Lightfeather mewed, her voice shaky. StreamClan was hungry and the last thing they wanted to hear was no.

"You guys are *pathetic*." A sigh came from the back of the clearing. *Skullsong*. I felt a growl creep up my throat from hatred. "Eating herbs for a living? What a stupid and idiotic move!" She snarled, fur spiked up as she headed for the camp entrance. I flicked my ear as I watched her every move through narrowed eyes.

"I won't stand to live in a Clan who eats like sheep and mice!" Skullsong yowled, and no one protested as she bolted out of the camp. Nightshade nor Wolftail seemed to care as she left a cloud of dirt as she raced away.

"She won't last long." Seastar mumbled. The Clan sat in silence for a few heartbeats.

"Okay," Lightfeather whispered, breathing in and out slowly. "Wolftail, feed Loudbird sorrel. Crescentmoon, take some juniper berries. You sound like you can't breathe all too well,"

"What can you do for Flamepaw?" I meowed quietly. "I have given him most of the juniper berries. It should've healed his cough and bellyaches already, but..." The medicine cat trailed away.

Oh my kit... My poor, poor kit...

***
I'm sorry for the very slow updates guys :(
Hope you enjoyed!
P_A83 out!

Chapter Nine

Shadowflower's POV

"You'll be okay, Greypaw," Crowflight murmured softly, stroking his sons' shoulders. I doubted how true his statement was, but I refused to say anything. Early in the morning, Greypaw had stumbled into the medicine den, complaining about how thirsty and dizzy he was. I was concerned about his health, so I made him stay in the den with me.

The water smelled foul and looked deadly to taste. No one dared to drink it after Jaggedpaw and Birchpaw had died. Loss of water had taken a toll on most cats but it was Greypaw and Oakshadow mostly. The big thing seemed to be less prey and the toxic air we breathed in daily.

I blinked away my thoughts as I watched Coldflight comfort Greypaw when he started to breathe rapidly. The grey apprentice squirmed in discomfort. I noticed his eyes were sunken in, meaning his dehydration problem was worsening. I padded over to the small tom and laid my ear on his chest to check his heartbeat. As I had assumed, his heartbeat had quickened, too. I sighed. Grief had left a lump in my throat since I figured Greypaw wouldn't live through the night.

"Greypaw, eat these. They will help your breathing and your heart and then help your fever," I ordered, passing over feverfew, chamomile, and coltsfoot. Groaning with the effort, the ill apprentice chewed the leaves and swallowed them. Just before I could explain something to him, I got a shocking surprise from Blossomfrost.

"Shadowflower, Sunwing passed out!" I jumped when Blossomfrost poked her head in and gestured with her head for me to follow. "Excuse me," I grunted to Crowflight. He dipped his head as I headed out. Marshstar, Silverfeather, Tigerstripe, and Oakshadow had already gathered around the she-cat as more cats hurried over.

"Why did she pass out? Has she been eating?" I pushed past the curious cats and flicked my tail. *Today isn't going to be a good day*. "She had been coughing all night. She would even spit up *blood* sometimes." Whitefire croaked, glancing at me. She had gathered around.

I laid my ear to their chest and strained to listen carefully. There was a faint sound of a heartbeat. Her skin was hot on the side of my head so I assumed she was getting a fever. "She is alive but in need of water..." I informed the startled Clan.

"Which we don't have," Tigerstripe snarled, rolling his eyes.

"Thanks for lightening the mood." Ripplecurrent commented, lashing her tail and squinting her eyes. Stormcloud nodded in agreement. "I went to see Briarleaf, but when I tried to wake her up-" Acornpaw reported. He had to pause to cough. My heart sped up. Eyes wide, I gulped in fear when I noticed he was having a hard time breathing. Acornpaw coughed a few times more, blood splattering onto the ground.

Not Acornpaw, too. I thought just when the apprentice began to finish his sentence. "When I tried to wake Briarleaf, she didn't respond. She's really cold, too." Acornpaw rasped. He began to cough again when I ordered someone to keep an eye on Sunwing. I rushed into the elders den with Blossomfrost on my heels.

Blossomfrost nudged her mother gently when we entered the stuffy den. She didn't stop nudging the elderly she-cat even when she didn't answer for a long period of time. It left a pang in my heart knowing her mother was gone, but grief turned into fear as I thought about the fact that her mother could wake up and then eat her daughter.

"I think she's gone, Blossomfrost." I whispered to the young she-cat. She whimpered as I backed her up.

I checked for a heartbeat, but there wasn't one. She was as cold as ice which sent a chill down my spine. "I'm going to bring her out." I stated, grabbing the scrawny and limp cat by her scruff. Blossomfrost helped out. I laid her in the center of the camp.

"Say your goodbyes, then we will bury her. We can't risk her coming back... *different*." I bowed my head to Blossomfrost as she hung her head beside her mother.

I rushed back over to the orange she-cat. *Without water, I can't wake her up or even help her thirst. I could drop chamomile's juice into Sunwing's mouth, though...* I realized. I bolted back into the den and snatched the rest of the chamomile. Halting at Sunwing's unresponsive body, I opened her jaws and squeezed the juice into her mouth.

"What will that do?" Marshstar fretted with his tail lashing. The others looked at me eagerly, hoping I could save the young warrior. Oakshadow leaned in closer; he was obviously worried about his last sister.

"It will quench her thirst a bit while soothing her mind and strengthen her heart," I informed him. He dipped his head.

"Shadowflower, Clawkit is complaining of a bellyache again! He needs more berries!" Darkshine gasped from the nursery. I nodded and hurried into the medicine cat den to grab juniper berries for the small kit. I grabbed poppy seeds as well.

I trotted into the nursery with a ivy leaf filled with juniper berries and poppyseeds that swung as I rushed to the queens nest. I pushed the berries to the kits mouth and urged him to eat a few. Clawkit whimpered in pain as he swallowed them down. He clawed at the nest as his breathing became raspy, short, and fast.

Clawkit slowly stopped to twitch and groan as the poppy seeds kicked in. "The seeds I gave him made him sleep," I reassured the queen quickly. "The berries will help his bellyache and his breathing and will give him strength. Hopefully."

The desperate queen swallowed and nodded. "Call me if he wakes up." I meowed as I left the nursery fast. I was nice and cool in the nursery but as soon as I set foot out of the den, I was hit with the extreme heat of the blistering sun that hovered in the blue sky above. *No wonder we are dying of dehydration already,* I felt a growl threaten to escape.

"Sunwing hasn't woken up but she's still breathing," Silverfeather reported calmly, meeting me half way. I nodded to her in acknowledgement as I passed by the deputy.

I ducked my head into the medicine cat den just as Crowflight was leaving his sons side. "Thank SoulClan you're here! Greypaw fainted and I can't get him to wake up!" Crowflight murmured. His eyes were as wide as moons and his fur was spiking up like a porcupine.

I padded over to Greypaw to make sure he was breathing, but no air came from his jaws nor nostrils. *No*. I thought. Panic surged through my veins.

Blood trickled from his nose and his mouth. The nose was understandable with the dry air, but the blood from his mouth was spine chilling. *No, not Greypaw, too...*

Crowflight nudged me, shivering in fear. "What's wrong? Is he okay, Shadowflower?"

My head began to pound from the stress and pressure. *I don't know!* I almost blurted out, furious from the questioning. "He's gone," I growled. Crowflight yowled in grief. He laid over Greypaw's still body and muttered things I couldn't catch.

I heard Darkshine howl. My ears perked up and I bolted out. My paws, head, and lungs throbbed in pain from the many things to do and the stress from the chores. *Greypaw and Briarleaf are dead. Clawkit and Sunwing may not make it through the night. If we leave them above ground for too much longer, the rest of us might be in danger...*

Clawkit sat in a nest full of vomit, vibrating and wailing in pain. "Darkshine... Darkshine it hurts!" Clawkit whined. Darkshine turned to me. "Help him! You're a medicine cat, do your job!" She snapped, eyes narrowed and tail bushy.

I shook my head and closed my eyes. *Calm down. What would Cindersong do?*

I took a deep breath and opened my eyes again.

***

I laid in my nest with droopy eyes and a racing mind. I couldn't let myself fall asleep in case Clawkit or Sunwing woke up. I had moved them into the den once the sun had drifted up to the top of the sky. Clawkit had passed out cold, Sunwing hadn't moved since earlier that morning, while Darkshine was given poppy seeds. She had lost her temper and begun to wail, demanding her precious kit be treated.

It was only the middle of the day, but I was already exhausted. Acornpaw had dropped to the ground, dead. Just like that. Blood pooled around his jaws. He was spatting blood and choking on it so much, he actually had drowned in his own blood.

I sat up and stretched, deciding to check the camp. Marshstar had gone out with Tigerstripe and Oakshadow to search for prey and water.

To my excitement, as I padded up to our three dead Clanmates, Briarleaf began to twitch. I jumped back. It was too good to be true to hope it was the Briarleaf we knew.

Her hollow eyes opened and I knew she wasn't the real Briarleaf when I found out her green eyes were now a pasty white. "Throw her into the river! She's not Briarleaf!" I yowled a warning. Blossomfrost gasped and was pushed back by Silverfeather.

Briarleaf groaned and staggered to stand. Greypaw opened his eyes and stood up as well. Acornpaw was still limp. "Bury Sniperpaw while we get rid of Briarleaf and Greypaw!" Silverfeather ordered.

Softpelt scrambled to her paws backed away from Briarleaf as she stumbled toward the laid back warrior.

I hurried over to the lazy warrior but before I could get to her, Briarleaf latched onto the warriors neck when Softpelt had to stop because of the river behind them. Softpelt wailed in pain as Briarleaf ripped out her flesh.

Blood poured from the deep wound, staining her snowy pelt a dark crimson red. Her eyes were glazed with pain as she lashed out at

the emotionless elder. Briarleaf didn't seem to care as Softpelt cut up her face, grabbing onto Softpelt again. She shoved her back, screaming as her flesh went with the flesh-craving monster.

Whitefire hurried over to help her out. My paws were frozen to the ground.

"No! Sparkpaw, watch out!" Blazeflame yelled, jumping in front of her last daughter. Greypaw bit into Blazeflame's leg instead of Sparkpaw's. Silverfeather and Blossomfrost shoved into the apprentice.

Her deep wound oozed out dark blood so fast, the starving mother passed out. As she collapsed, Sparkpaw shook her to wake her, just when Acornpaw awoke.

Oh great SoulClan, what am I to do?!

***

A/N:
Sorry if it's too long or anything :(Chapter Ten ***will not*** *be out for a long time, since I'm leaving wattpad for 3 weeks. I'm leaving tomorrow, so I don't think I'll be on :(*
I hope you understand, hope you enjoyed, have a good week!
P_A83 out'

Chapter Ten

Wildflower's POV

I fluttered open my eyes when I heard the sound of someone whimpering. It made my heart lurch. After my eyes adjusted to the dim light, I lifted my tail off of my muzzle and looked over my shoulder to see Wolftail comforting Nightshade. *Poor Nightshade,* I thought, sighing. *She can't sleep properly after Ivysplash's death.*

Now awake, I stood up and cleaned up my knotted fur. "It will be okay, Nightshade. It wasn't your fault," Wolftail stroked his sisters flank softly. "She's with SoulClan now." Wolftail looked up at me and gave me an apologetic look. I bowed my head to him and padded out of the den.

Even with the sun barely visible, the air was warm and stuffy like the medicine den. I could hear Flamepaw and Mistfire coughing from their dens. I hurried into the medicine cat den to check on Lightfeather and Smokepaw. Lightfeather was checking on Flamepaw while Smokepaw snored quietly.

Lightfeather turned around at my entrance and gave me a tired smile. "How are they?" I asked, heading towards the two ill cats.

"Not well..." She shook her head. "Flamepaw's coughing is getting worse. He's spitting up blood." I nodded. We went silent.

I heard the warriors begin to wake. "Well, I'm going to set out patrols to the healthy ones. Good luck," I touched my sister with my nose to her shoulder and exited the den.

"Tell them to come get traveling herbs from me when they are assigned to a patrol!" Lightfeather called after me. I decided not to reply.

I stood in the center of the clearing, the groggy cats following. Ghostglow sat with his back straight and eyes narrowed, his son

doing the same. Whitefeather was always like Ghostglow, while Ivysplash was like her mother, Whisperecho. Amberpaw rushed out of the apprentice's den and into the medicine den to check on her brother, Dawnflower following on her heels.

Dawnflower was growing sicker. She always fed her kits before herself, even though Flamepaw didn't ever take more than one bite.

Crescentmoon, Spottedfire, Rowantail, Nightshade, Wolftail, and Sootpaw came out to join the crowd. Spottedfire was the scrawniest of them all and I could hear her breathing from where I sat. Rowantail began to cough, Sootpaw chiming in. Crescentmoon looked depressed, and I guessed it was because Twistedsoul had passed away. And then came back... *evil*. Cats started to murmur.

Everyone is getting sick. Is this a new form of illness that we will have to deal with? I wondered, narrowing my eyes to examine the crowd. Wolftail left the crowd to greet his mate and kit as they left the nursery.

Loudbird demanded something from him and Wolftail gave her a sympathetic look afterwards. Whatever she wanted, he would get it for her. *Why can't Loudbird appreciate his offerings?*

"Quiet down," I ordered, waving my tail for silence. Everyone went silent. "When I call your name, go see Lightfeather for traveling herbs."

"Whitefeather, lead a patrol around the Gathering Place with Nightshade, Lilypaw, Crescentmoon, and Wolftail. Focus on hunting and remark the border," Whitefeather dipped his head and headed to the get herbs with Wolftail hurrying after him. Nightshade left to grab Lilypaw. "Rowantail, Flamepaw is ill, you will be taking Spottedfire and Sootpaw out across the river by the second waterfall. Search for more water sources. Do not come back until the sun goes down!"

Rowantail brushed her tail under Ghostglow's chin and purred as she headed to the medicine den. Ghostglow gave her a disgusted look and curled his lip. Crescentmoon rolled her eyes and trotted

into the medicine cat den.

Smokepaw hurried out. "I think she should stay here and rest." He insisted, eyes narrowed with concern. Lightfeather popped her head out. "When she is back, she will have something to eat. Dawnflower, too." She nodded and went back into the den, her mind made up.

"Lilypaw won't get up, she is really sick," Nightshade informed me from the apprentices den. Lightfeather padded out of the medicine den and headed over to treat the apprentice. I dipped my head. "Go without her,"

"I will lead a patrol with Ghostglow, Dawnflower, and Amberpaw. We will hunt near the shore." I announced. Mistfire hurried out of the elders den and stood in front of me with her chin high. "I will join. I am capable of doing such a thing." I twitched my ear.

"You need to rest; I heard you coughing all morning." I pressed. She shook her head and left with the three others to get traveling herbs. The other patrols left. I rolled my eyes and hurried into the crowded medicine den. Ghostglow and Dawnflower left with Amberpaw heading out behind them. Flamepaw groaned in pain. Mistfire ate the last of the herb pile.

"That's all the burnet I have..." The medicine cat whispered. She grabbed another few leaves and passed them to me. I ate it and left the den.

I led the patrol out confidently, Mistfire coughing and spitting the whole time we traveled to the shore. Amberpaw rushed ahead and let out a gasp. Dawnflower took off with Ghostglow on her tail. Mistfire and I exchanged confused glances and hurried up.

My eyes widened in shock when I skidded to a halt to the line where the water was once at. "Oh great SoulClan," I muttered, skimming the rest of the water. Even the waterfall was thinner.

Fish laid on the grass and pebbles, dead and stinking. The fur along my spine stood up. "The water has gone down so much!" Amberpaw whimpered, glancing over her shoulder at her mother.

"Yes, but we need to hunt. We can't drink it anyway." Ghostglow nudged his apprentice away from the shore and padded to the edge of the other shore. I looked over into the water. I could see the bottom of the river now. A rocky bottom with green moss swaying in the current.

"Help me get rid of the fish," I demanded softly to no one in particular. *This isn't good. SoulClan, send us rain,* I prayed, closing my eyes.

***

We padded into camp with pride booming from our patrol. We had caught a magpie and a pigeon. We were all excited, especially Dawnflower. I knew she was planning on giving the pigeon to Flamepaw and Amberpaw, but I was planning on forcing her to eat with Spottedfire. "This magpie will be given to the queens. The pigeon will be given to Dawnflower and Spottedfire." I announced as we entered the camp.

Dawnflower looked like I had told her we were throwing the prey away. "Flamepaw and Amberpaw need it more!" She argued, her eyes flooded with fury. I shook my head.

"I am not arguing with you. You and Spottedfire need that pigeon more than they do," I looked over to Amberpaw. "No offence." She only shrugged.

"Ghostglow, make sure Dawnflower and Spottedfire eat," I ordered over my shoulder. He nodded as I went into the nursery.

"Moonfur, Blackwind, Loudbird, here is a magpie." I meowed. But as I looked around, the three already were eating a crow. "Nevermind," I purred.

Backing out, I dropped the magpie in the fresh-kill pile. A mouse was the only thing that occupied the hole. My stomach growled and it took all the will-power I had to not eat them both.

I nodded to Dawnflower and Crescentmoon in satisfaction when I noticed they were both eating the pigeon. Spottedfire wasn't

back yet, and I began to worry.

I approached Seastar to report what we seen. "The water has gone down quite a lot. We cleared the shore of the dead fish and we caught two birds." She dipped her head to me and I began to pad away.

"Everyone old enough to hunt, gather around to hear my word." Seastar announced. I turned around in shock, unsure about what her announcement was about.

"We have experienced many deaths, odd weather, loss of prey and water, but StreamClan remains strong," Everyone was silent. All the patrols - except for Rowantail's patrol - were back now. Wolftail had added a snake to the fresh-kill pile, but nothing else. "Whisperkit, Thornkit, come forward."

Blackwind popped her head out, her eyes glittering with excitement and pride, and scooted her kits forward. She licked them clean as they went by. "Whisperkit, you are now six moons old. From now until you become a warrior, you will be known as Whisperpaw. Wolftail will be your mentor. I trust he will give you all the skills you need to be an amazing warrior." Whisperkit gasped in shock and touched noses with Wolftail when he came by.

Chipkit watched from the nursery. Wolftail sat into the crowd with his new apprentice beside him. Whisperpaw was almost bouncing with happiness. "Thornkit, from now until you become a warrior, you will be known as Thornpaw. Crescentmoon will be your mentor. I believe she will be able to teach you all the finest ways to be a loyal and strong warrior."

Crescentmoon touched noses with her new apprentice. Thornpaw puffed out his chest and sat beside Whisperpaw. "Whisperpaw! Thornpaw!" The Clan cheered.

The cheers eventually died down. "We will take them out now to see the territory!" Wolftail announced, padding away with Crescentmoon beside him and the two new apprentices following quickly beside him. "Dawnflower. I need to see you." Lightfeather gestured with her tail for the distraught mother to come.

Dawnflower looked around at the crowd of suspicious cats and swallowed the last of her meal. She wearily padded into the medicine cat den. "It was my fault..." Dawnflower wailed, and then all confusion switched to sorrow.

***

Sorry for slow updates! Hope you enjoyed this chapter, chapter eleven will be out soon! Thanks for the votes and feedback!

P_A83 out!

Chapter Eleven

Tigerstripe's POV

Breathing heavily, I sat up in my nest and looked over to my side. My heartbeat was quickened and my eyes were as wide as moons. My dreams had been filled with undead cats coming for Blossomfrost and I. I relaxed when I found Blossomfrost lying in her nest beside me, her flank rising and falling slowly.

I blinked and watched her sleep peacefully. Her white ears twitched and I found that mine mimicked her. *Stop being so creepy.* The voice inside my head growled. My ears went flat as I resisted the need to say something aloud to the voice.

I stalked out of the den with anger boiling in my veins. *I wasn't being creepy. I was just making sure she wasn't dead!* The voice didn't reply, which angered me even more.

I began to lick my fur clean of knots and moss. My tail twitched in annoyance. The moon was making its way down the blue sky while clouds covered the blanket of white stars. Just as I began to clean my shoulders, I leaped up in pure shock as a bloodcurdling scream came from the nursery. Fur spiked up, eyes wide, and tail bushy, I found myself frozen to the ground.

The scream continued. I bolted into the nursery after gaining the strength and realized Ripplecurrent was having her kits. "Shadowflower!" I called, hurrying for the medicine den. She was already on her way to the nursery. A second wail came from the nursery, combining with Ripplecurrents.

"My kits! Shadowflower, help my kits!" It was Snowfern.

I began to shake as a growl crept up my throat. Cats peeked out of their dens; tension and worry floated around the camp.

Blossomfrost hurried over to me. I felt myself relax. "What's going

on?" She asked quietly, sitting beside me. Her eyes were half closed and her fur was messy. *She's so cute.* I thought. I shrugged and didn't reply.

Stormcloud pushed past the growing crowd of cats, moss flying from his long grey fur. "I'm going to check on Oakshadow, Sunwing, Blazeflame, and Clawkit. Want to come with me?" Blossomfrost stood up and looked over her shoulder at me. I nodded and followed her into the medicine den.

I blinked until my eyes adjusted to the light. Not being able to drink the rivers water had taken a toll on Oakshadow more than Shadowflower had expected. He could barely move because of the heat exhaustion, his eye sockets were sunken in, and his breathing was raspy. Sunwing's condition was worsening, Blazeflame could barely open her eyes, and Clawkit refused to do anything other than sleep. Sunwing and Blazeflame weren't moving.

Darkshine slept beside her kits small, bony body. *If Blossomfrost gets like this, I bet you'll be a dramatic furball just like her*. The voice in my head purred. I heard cats laughing around me. Shaking my head, I forced myself to ignore it, in fear that I would embarrass myself in front of Blossomfrost.

"No! Leave them alone!"

Blossomfrost gave me an unsure and scared look before bolting out. Giving the ill cats one last glance, I hurried out after her.

Whitefire had laid Rosekit and Thunderkit in the clearing, blocking Snowfern from getting to them. "Calm down. Please, they're in SoulClan now," Whitefire mewed. Snowfern collapsed and sobbed. Dreamkit was behind her mother, her eyes filled with confusion and sorrow.

"What happened to Thunderkit and Rosekit, Snowfern? Are they sleeping?" Dreamkit nudged her mother softly but Snowfern's only reply was a moan. The tiny kit looked up to Whitefire and padded up to her. She glanced at her siblings and cocked her head to the side.

"They're with SoulClan," Whitefire mewled softly, licking the fur between Dreamkit's ears. Dreamkit didn't seem to understand but nodded anyway.

"Poor Snowfern," Blossomfrost shook her head. I rested my tail on her shoulders.

She looked over at me. Her eyes were filled with care and heartache. I gave her an encouraging smile. "One more to go, Ripplecurrent," I heard Shadowflower murmur from the nursery. Silverfeather padded up to the center of the clearing, behind the two stiff kits, and announced the patrols would still be going.

"Gather to say goodbye to the two young kits, Rosekit and Thunderkit. May SoulClan light their path to find their father," Silverfeather mewed. Snowfern sat up and scooted in beside her two kits, letting her head hang. Dreamkit sat beside her mother and gazed up at her. Whitefire picked up the pale grey she-kit and brought her away.

Ripplecurrent's cries stopped and all went silent. Shadowflower appeared from the den a few moments after. Marshstar padded up to her. "Two toms and a she-kit," She murmured, passing by the leader with no more than a glance.

Mutters broke the silence of the depressing morning. Snowfern didn't seem happy for her denmate, she seemed more jealous than anything. Blossomfrost followed the medicine cat into her den. I strained to hear what they were saying but I couldn't catch their conversation.

She came back out and stopped beside me. "She doesn't know if her kits will survive the night. They're weak and so is Ripplecurrent," Blossomfrost gave me a depressed glance and padded into the nursery.

"Whitefire, take Crowflight and Sparkpaw out to the willow tree. I will take Stormcloud, Tigerstripe, and Blossomfrost over to-" Shadowflower suddenly bolted out of the medicine cat den, interrupting Silverfeather's announcement. She halted in front of Marshstar.

"Blazeflame and Sunwing stopped breathing," The medicine cat panted. *What about Oakshadow?* I wondered. Her eyes were teeming with grief, trauma, and misery. Marshstar looked over at his deputy and then rushed into the medicine cat den. Shadowflower headed after him. Sparkpaw tore past the leader, heading for the den to see her mother.

Sparkpaw had spent all her free time trying to cheer and nurture her mother, trying to make her day brighter. *One less mouth to feed.* The voice muttered in my head. My tail lashed but I held back anything I wanted to say.

Anger pulsed through the blood that pumped through my veins as I realized how small our Clan was becoming. I became angry out of fear. My gut told me to get rid of the dead bodies. Something was off but I didn't know what it was.

Marshstar came out of the den with fear in his eyes. Shadowflower sat outside of her den, head down in shame. "Whitefire, take Crowflight and Sparkpaw on patrol to the willow tree, but I want Silverfeather's patrol to stay here." He demanded. Whitefire led the patrol away.

Blossomfrost poked her head out of the nursery out of curiosity. She padded up to me and stopped right in front of me. Opening her mouth, she went to speak, but a bloodcurdling cry made her jaw shut with a snap.

Everyone's heads turned toward the medicine den. Shadowflower's head shot up and she rushed back into her den. Listening to my gut feeling, I held Blossomfrost back by her scruff.

She wriggled and tried to get out of my grip but I refused to let go.

Silverfeather hurried into the den when Shadowflower didn't come back out. The cries continued. It sounded like Darkshine; she slept with Clawkit in the medicine den. Silverfeather dragged the medicine cat out of the den, both clean of wounds. "Let me go!" Blossomfrost pulled and pulled, but the more she tried, the more I tightened my grip.

Marshstar approached Shadowflower. "What happened? Is Oakshadow and Clawkit alright?"

"I-I went in there to find Sunwing e-eating Oakshadow... Then Clawkit w-woke up. I went to grab him to save him but... he b-bit Darkshine... I-I couldn't help them..." She stammered, vibrating violently. I let Blossomfrost go. She went flying into the ground, a dust cloud forming around her face, but as soon as she hit the ground she got back up.

Just when Blossomfrost began to comfort the traumatized medicine cat, Blazeflame came stumbling out. My fur spiked up along my spine. Blazeflame headed for Shadowflower and Blossomfrost. My gut churned and without even thinking, I dashed forward and shoved the two out of the way.

They tumbled just enough to get away from Blazeflame. I could hear Darkshine whimpering from the nursery along with more growls.

I could hear my heartbeat and feel the blood pumping fast through my body. "We can't stay here." I snarled to no one in particular. Marshstar looked at his deputy but all Silverfeather could do was look around at the other cats for their opinion.

"Silverfeather, carry one of Ripplecurrents kits while Stormcloud and you take the other two. Snowfern, take Dreamkit," Marshstar looked around the cats as they scurried to get the jobs they were assigned done. Silverfeather and Stormcloud went into the nursery, but Snowfern didn't know what to do. Her kits still lay in the center of the camp.

Dreamkit approached her, mewling in fear. I grabbed her by the scruff and yanked Snowfern up. Blossomfrost dug a large hole - one that could fit two kits - and buried the dead kits.

Dreamkit squealed in my grasp. Blossomfrost nudged Snowfern out of the camp. Ripplecurrent came out of the nursery, looking tired, and carried Lionkit, Stormcloud carried Boulderkit, and Silverfeather carried Pebblekit. "Everyone evacuate the camp!" Marshstar yowled.

Clawkit and Sunwing came out of the medicine den all bloody and torn up. Silverfeather led Stormcloud, Ripplecurrent, and I out of the camp. Marshstar waited for Shadowflower to sneak back out of her den to get the remaining herbs she could get.

"Head for the log in the Gathering Place!" Silverfeather yelled through Pebblekit's scruff. The three kits mewled in fear.

With Dreamkit swaying in my teeth, I bolted past the patrol until I came to the log. I set Dreamkit down inside the shaded log and sat down to wait for everyone else.
***
The sun began to sink down the sky when I returned to the camp from a hunting patrol. Whitefire's patrol had brought back nothing, so I led one with Crowflight and Silverfeather. Our hunting party had been no better; Crowflight only caught one rabbit.

As we came to a stop, I realized StreamClan had joined us.

Seastar was sitting away from her and our Clan. Something was odd about her posture. Her eyes were wide and dilated, her fur was messy, and her tail was twitching. She seemed paranoid. I noticed StreamClan had no elders, only three apprentices - Sootpaw, Smokepaw, and Amberpaw, who was curled up by herself, whimpering - and no full medicine cat. Thornkit and Whisperkit seemed old enough to be apprentices, though, and they acted as if they already were.

I turned toward our leader when he began to speak. "I know this isn't my place to order StreamClan around with my Clan, but I would like Tigerstripe, Crowflight, Rowantail, and Wolftail to guard with me tonight." Marshstar glanced among the fearful group of cats as they all obeyed him. Rowantail left her sobbing sister, Dawnflower, to guard.

Blossomfrost lay down beside me as I settled down to guard the group of cats. I blinked down at her as she rested her tail over her nose. *I will protect you,* I vowed inwardly.

***

Again, sorry for slow updates. Hope you enjoyed guys! Thanks for the feedback, by the way! Keep voting and commenting!

P_A83 out!

Chapter Twelve

Seastar's POV

I opened my eyes to a hot wind blowing through my messy fur. We all had to sleep out in the open on the Gathering Place, except the queens and kits of course. They had their shade in the log that bordered StreamClan and RockClan.

I sat up and immediately felt a wave of dizziness and motion sickness. Breathing in and out slowly, my vision soon went back to normal.

The sun was out and everyone in both Clans were up. I quickly glanced over to check out my bite wound on my shoulder. It looked infected but I knew I couldn't ask Smokepaw or Shadowflower to treat it. They would know what it was from and we all knew what happened to cats with bites from the infected. It's only a small bite. I began to shake. *I'm sure I will be okay. I still have four lives left...*

Memories of Mistfire sacrificing herself for Dawnflower and I from Flamepaw hit me. Flamepaw's eyes were white, he stumbled around. Blood dripped from his gaping jaws. He hadn't of looked like himself anymore. His body existed here but his spirit was gone as if someone had taken over him. Lightfeather had laid in her den torn apart from the jaws of Flamepaw, blood all over our herbs and extra bedding. Dawnflower was still devastated. Amberpaw was traumatized and depressed.

"Seastar?" I shook my head when Marshstar interrupted me. "Seastar, are you alright?" He meowed. I nodded but didn't speak.

"Okay, well, where is Lightfeather?" I blinked at him and hesitated.

He cocked his head in curiosity. "She passed away," I answered finally, my ear twitching. He gave me a sympathetic look and then bowed his head.

"You should give Smokepaw his full medicine cat name, and then his brother should become a warrior." I nodded slowly through narrowed eyes. "Did Lilypaw die as well?" I suddenly felt defensive and hurt. He acted as if Lightfeather's death was nothing. I nodded.

"I am truly sorry for your losses." Marshstar dipped his head and padded away.

I stood up and staggered to the center of the cats, dizzy. "Are you okay, Seastar? Maybe you should lay down." Wildflower suggested. Her eyes were filled with concern. I narrowed my eyes at the calico deputy. There was a double of her.

"I am fine." I insisted, turning to the crowd of cats. "Everyone old enough to hunt, gather please." I yowled. They all blinked at me.

"Smokepaw, Sootpaw, come forward," The two grey toms hurried towards me. Sootpaw puffed out his chest, his eyes flooding with pride. Smokepaw looked noble and serious.

"Smokepaw, the death of Lightfeather was very sudden but I am determined that you are ready to be our full medicine cat. From this day forward, you will be known as Smoketail," I touched his shoulder as he touched the opposite one that was wounded. My head felt hot as I lifted my head away from him.

"Sootpaw, you may still be immature in some ways, but you are a determined, lively, and curious young tom and I believe you will be a good warrior for StreamClan. From this day forward, you will be known as Sootclaw." I touched his shoulder and he did the same. The two Clans cheered their names, but their voices seemed far away. With wide eyes, I shook my head and padded away from the Clan.

I just need to rest again.

I laid down by the edge of the Gathering Place and curled up by myself. The sun gleamed down on my blueish-grey fur. I felt like I was boiling up, like my head was going to explode.

"Sootclaw, take out your first patrol with Spottedfire and Whitefire.

Take it wherever you feel you should go." Wildflower instructed. I watched the newly made warrior bounce away from the group. As another patrol with Wolftail, Blackwind, and Stormcloud left, I dozed off.
***
My eyes blinked open to rain pouring from the darkened sky. Everything was blurry but I could still see the cats dancing around in the rain. My heart warmed up at the happiness that spread around.

My head seemed heavier than usual and the cats around me seemed farther away than they actually were. And before I knew it, I was out like a light again.
***
I jolted awake when the sound of screaming hit me like a storm. Thunder crashed above my head. Cats were fighting. *Did they get into a fight?* But as I stood back and watched, I realized their opponents weren't fighting back.

I stood up and hurried into the bloody mess. I felt lightheaded but I was determined to help them fight the infected cats.

Silverfeather, Wildflower, and Crowflight were fighting an infected cat. They looked mangy and scarred, as if they were the rogues that were always mentioned at the Gatherings by Marshstar. Tigerstripe and Blossomfrost worked together to beat back another rogue. Nightshade, Ghostglow, and Crescentmoon were clawing at the third rogue. None of the three infected cats seemed to look tired, damaged, nor angry. They were completely emotionless.

Dawnflower protected Amberpaw from all three of them. The three infected cats weren't even trying to get at the apprentice, but Dawnflower still needed to protect her.

Feeling sick, dizzy, and lightheaded, I unsheathed my claws and helped Tigerstripe and Blossomfrost. Lightning crashed over our heads, brightening the dark sky. "Moonfur passed away while having kits!" Blossomfrost yowled over the thunder as we pushed the cat back. We aimed to back it into the gorge.

"Only one kit survived! We named it Hollowkit!" She added. I grew

angry. My heartbeat sped up, my fur spiked up, and I let out a yowl of rage. I had believed Moonfur was going to survive and have healthy kits just like her mate wanted. *She's with Jayfall and Mistfire now.* I reassured myself.

I slashed at the infected cat with all my might. I hit its eyes, nose, and chest, but it didn't cry out in pain or even fight back. Blood welled up from the wounds and stained its mangy pelt. I pushed it back with my shoulders until it slipped off of the gorge. With a satisfying crunch, it hit the ground on our territory. I watched it move around in the same spot, its growls echoing. *Why isn't it dead?*

I looked over my shoulder to see the others did the same with the other two infected cats. Tigerstripe stood by Blossomfrost, talking to her. Ripplecurrent's kits mewled loudly.

Breathing heavily, I watched Smoketail approach me wearily. I just panted. I noticed how well he was taking his sisters death. "You should sit down, Seastar," I nodded and sat down. The rain hit my pelt like large claws. I could feel the rain drops hit me more than usual as if I had a fever.

"Another one coming from the west!" Wolftail called as he traveled back from the singular willow tree. We all turned to the west to see another dark figure hurrying toward us. It had a white head and a muscular body. As it neared us I noticed that his white head was actually a skull. I realized it wasn't an infected cat. *I'm seeing things. No cat has a skull on their head...*

Marshstar, Wolftail, Blackwind, Wildflower, Silverfeather, Crowflight, Blossomfrost, and Tigerstripe met him half way. "Who are you?" Marshstar asked, flicking his ear. Wildflower took her place beside him as if she was already leader.

The cat was muscular, dark brown, scarred, and tall. He put his head onto the ground and used one paw to pull the skull off of his head. He held his head high as he spoke.

"I am Lark," He gazed at the crowd of cats. Marshstar narrowed his eyes at him. "You will not survive if you stay here."

"What do you mean we won't survive if we stay here?" Wildflower snarled. Her lip curled and she unsheathed her claws. Marshstar growled something to her. She relaxed a bit but she didn't stop narrowing her eyes at the tom.

"There are several of those infected cats, Twolegs, and dogs around. They are bound to come here and tear you all apart. You are all scrawny and incapable of fighting them," Lark insisted.

Snowfern came bounding over. She halted just behind Marshstar. They all turned toward her. "We aren't going anywhere without Whitefire! They still haven't come back!" Snowfern gave all the cats a wild look but no one defended her.

"Smoketail, Sootclaw could be just out of our sight but you won't defend me?" She snapped. Smoketail's ears laid back but he didn't reply. Snowfern looked at Wildflower. Wildflower gulped. "Your last sister, who is *ill*, is out there. You can't tell me you want to leave without her!"

"We haven't made any decisions yet." Wildflower stated with a lash of her long tail. The rain poured loudly as the silence took over.

"I think this place is dangerous. We can't find any prey around here anymore. We are bound to die of hunger or from the infection in this wide open space." I added in a shaky tone. "If you go, I will gladly stay here and watch for them." Lark bowed his head to me then looked back to Marshstar.

"How do you know if we're a threat or not?" RockClan's leader asked.

Lark put his head back into the skull and simply meowed, "You would have killed me already."
***
Sorry for no updates for a while! More chapters will be out soon! Hope you enjoyed!

P_A83 out!

Chapter Thirteen

Wolftail's POV

"What makes you think we can trust you? Coming over here with your gross looking skull protector thing like you own the gorge!" Wildflower snapped. Marshstar hushed her. I could hear Thornpaw and Whisperpaw purring behind us. Blackwind whipped around and hissed something to them.

"Though rude, Wildflower is right. For all we know, if we follow you we could get ourselves into more trouble than we are already in." Marshstar stood tall and proud.

"If you have some sense, and if you truly care about these cats, then you will come with me." Lark looked at Marshstar dead in the eye. The rain poured down hard. I pushed past Crowflight and Silverfeather to stand in between Wildflower and Marshstar.

"Even if he is leading us into a trap, we could easily kill him and whoever might be waiting for us. I'm sure he is only trying to help us, and for SoulClan's sake we need it," I looked over to Marshstar then to Wildflower. They looked a bit more convinced but didn't say anything.

"If you won't go with him, then you won't see me again. I'm going with him and I'm taking Loudbird, Chipkit, and Nightshade with me." I bowed my head to Lark and then backed away, heading to wake Loudbird and Chipkit.

As I headed towards the log, they all started to talk again. I felt Nightshade's presence beside me. "Who are you to choose if I go or not?" She hissed. I glanced over at her. "You are my sister and I will not lose you to the infection spreading like a wildfire."

Nightshade narrowed her eyes at me but to my relief, she didn't argue.

I ducked my head into the log. Dreamkit was sleeping peacefully beside Ripplecurrent who had four kits sleeping at her stomach. Hollowkit was the smallest, Lionkit and Pebblekit were growing bigger and stronger, but Boulderkit was just as small as Hollowkit. Small and still. Loudbird was still as well with Chipkit cuddled up beside her.

I headed over to the other side of the log. Splashing through puddles, I ducked my head into the log to nudge Loudbird awake. She was cold and stiff. My heart practically stopped in fear.

"Loudbird? Loudbird we are leaving soon." I whispered. I started to shake. Ripplecurrent opened her eyes. I nudged Loudbird harder but she barely budged. "Loudbird, we have to go."

Chipkit woke up and stretched. He was growing even though he probably hadn't had a decent meal for a few days. "Is Loudbird still sleeping?" Chipkit mewed. I didn't answer him. Still shaking, I nudged Loudbird one last time before it hit me that she really was gone.

"Look, Wolftail! It's still raining!" Chipkit squealed, prancing around and splashing in the puddles. His light brown pelt was caked in dark brown mud in mere heartbeats. I tried to feel happy at seeing my son finally pleased, but all I could think about was that Loudbird was gone.

Ripplecurrent dragged Loudbird out by her scruff and laid her in front of the log. Everyone turned around. Ripplecurrent sighed as her kits began to mewl. She padded to the log to check on them. Chipkit stopped bouncing around when he realized Loudbird was laying in the rain. He looked up at me with sorrow in his eyes. "Wolftail, will Loudbird turn into a monster like Flamepaw had?"

I felt my heart break at how at such a young age, Chipkit had to fear that his own mother would turn into a flesh-eating monster.

I shook my head and reassured him, "No, don't worry." He padded in under my chest and nuzzled my stomach fur.

"Seastar has agreed to stay here and wait for Sootclaw's patrol to

come back. We are all going with Lark to the Twolegplace." Marshstar announced. I personally thought Seastar was ill and that she should come with us, but I didn't feel the need to say anything.

I grabbed Chipkit by the scruff as Ripplecurrent laid Boulderkit beside Loudbird. *Oh SoulClan, why do there have to be so many deaths?* As everyone said their goodbyes to the two cats, Stormcloud hung his head in shame when he seen his kit dead. Ripplecurrent was emotionless as she grabbed Lionkit. "I fed the three a few moments ago," She informed her mate as Stormcloud hurried into the log to get Pebblekit.

Crescentmoon took Hollowkit as Shadowflower gave Ripplecurrent herbs. "These will help you produce more milk," She muttered. Hollowkit squealed as the cold rain hit his tiny, fluffy pelt. He squirmed in her mouth and Crescentmoon looked uncomfortable.

I put Loudbird in the log with Boulderkit since we couldn't bury anything in the gorges rock. Nudging him, I scooted Chipkit away. He tried to resist but I hurried him along anyway.

Lark, Marshstar, and Wildflower took the lead of the patrol as we all began to head out. "StreamClan behind me, RockClan behind Marshstar." Wildflower demanded. I stood at the front just behind her with Chipkit in my jaws. Already my neck was sore from him but I refused to let him walk.

As I examined the traveling cats, I noticed Blackwind kept Thornpaw and Whisperpaw in front of her, Dawnflower kept Amberpaw and Rowantail on either side of her, Stormcloud, Ripplecurrent, and Crescentmoon stayed together, and Smoketail and Shadowflower stuck side-by-side. We headed off in silence as the rain slowed down.

Thornpaw couldn't keep his mouth shut any longer once the log was out of sight. "Lark, where did you get that cool skull?" The small brown tom chirped. Lark looked over his shoulder at the small tom.

"I was traveling here when I came across a rotting dog. Its skull came off easily when I tried. I ate the meat from its bones out of hunger and then put it on my head. The end," He replied simply.

Thornpaw looked up at the tall tom with amazement. Whisperpaw rolled her eyes as if she didn't believe it, but with such a muscular, scarred tom like Lark, I believed it fully.

No one spoke for what seemed to be moons until Rowantail let out a moan. "How much longer? My legs are sore..." Dawnflower hushed her. I rolled my eyes. *Good thing she is behind me or my eyes would be scooped out by that stupid she-cat,* I thought.

We padded on quickly and quietly. I scanned the terrains for any infected cats and just to our luck, a figure stumbled toward us. "Infected dog." Lark muttered, leading us around it.

I watched it drag its twisted, stained hind leg behind it. It had no bottom jaw. Chunks of flesh was missing from its thighs and I wondered how it could still be walking. I assumed it was hit by a monster, but with no Thunderpath near, I wondered as well where it came from. My fur spiked up along my spine.

"*Ew!* It's all bloody!" Dreamkit whined. Chipkit agreed with another "ew". Blood trailed from it as it tried to catch up to us. It moaned at us but as hard as it tried, it couldn't gain any speed. Chills went down my back as its groans echoed. Within moments, it was behind us.

Marshstar and Wildflower suddenly halted the group. "Wolftail, Nightshade, I think you might want to come see this." Wildflower sighed. My heartbeat sped up in curiosity. Setting Chipkit down, I headed around the leaders of the group and gagged at the sight.

My heart sunk. I looked away in shame as I realized the mangled body was my missing sister, Skullsong. Blood had leaked from her torn open stomach and pooled around her body. Tracks of big and small paw prints led away, proving the infected cats and dogs had gotten to her.

"No," Nightshade murmured from beside me. I looked over at her with pure agony and guilt. *Loudbird and now Skullsong? I should have forced her to stay... This is my fault.* As if Nightshade had read my mind, she rested her fluffy tail on my shoulder. "She chose to leave. It wasn't our fault." She reassured me softly.

"We must move on." Lark pressed, padding past us. Without a second glance at my dead sister, I headed back to the group to get Chipkit.
***
The sun beamed down on us harshly as we padded onto a Thunderpath from a ditch. We had camped out in the forest that night. To our luck, we had caught a few mice and birds, so we ate well. "I highly doubt any monsters will come by. Follow me." Lark trotted down the faded yellow line with everyone following cautiously.

The Thunderpath had blood stains and black trails all over it. It stunk of something rancid, making it hard to breathe through my nose. Thornpaw began to complain of the smell.

As we padded on the hot Thunderpath, we neared a monster that had fallen into the ditch. Its eyes were broken, its big black paws were flattened, and the Twolegs that had been in it were growling and reaching for us. A pool of blood had dried on its grey skin from the Twoleg that had been thrown half way out of the transparent front.

Even though it had the jagged transparent surface sticking through its back, it reached for us, too. Another infected Twoleg was trapped under the paws of the monster on its back. It growled at us and swung its arms, trying to grab us. As we passed by, I noticed a Twoleg kit was banging at the back transparent surface. It didn't talk like a Twoleg, only groaned.

Gulping, I hurried off.

I looked ahead to see Twoleg nests. I could hear the moaning and growling from where I was. As we came to the first Twoleg nest, Lark halted the group.

"I am going to check out the Twolegplace. Do not move from this spot unless something chases you." He instructed, padding off quietly.
***
Only like two days this took me! Woop woop!
Hope you guys enjoyed chapter thirteen. Comment what you think! Have

a good week!

P_A83 out!

Chapter Fourteen

Silverfeather's POV

I waited silently beside Marshstar. The sun was up fully with no clouds to cover it. I wished it would rain again, but I figured it wouldn't for a long time. The two small Clans sat on watch quietly. Lark had gone into the Twolegplace alone to see if it was safe to go through. I still didn't understand why we decided to follow him, or why he wanted us to come along. I didn't even know *where* we were actually going.

I looked around at the cats. They were all deathly scrawny and almost all of them wheezed when they breathed. Smoketail, Snowfern, and Wildflower looked badly depressed. They must have realized their siblings weren't coming back. I narrowed my eyes to myself when I noticed Seastar wasn't with us either.

The sound of moaning echoed from the huge Twolegplace, sending chills down my spine. My fur stood on end. *Can't we just... dig a hole underground and travel through that way?* But as much as I hoped there was another way, this *was* the safest, despite the fact that we could hear how many infected "things" were swarming in there.

The sky was a sheet of light blue with still no clouds. Just pure blue. There was no wind either. The air was hot and stuffy, making me wish the wind would come by.

Just as I began to believe Lark had ditched us, we all stood up quickly in hostility when we heard the sound of something coming from the Twolegplace. First thing that came to mind was that it was an infected animal of some sort, but it was only Lark.

Halting in front of Wildflower and Marshstar, he panted out a short reply, "It is full of infected Twolegs and dogs." The two leaders blinked at each other. I pushed my way in between them but didn't say anything.

"What a shame. Let's go back then." Marshstar sighed, turning around. Lark ran in front of him with narrowed eyes.

"We can't. The air is very toxic back there and is bound to kill each and every one of you slowly and painfully," He insisted through clenched teeth. Marshstar lashed his tail in rage. "Why? Do you have a camp filled with healthy, smart, stealthy, and strong cats? Or are we going nowhere just for the sake of it?" Marshstar snapped, not expecting a reply.

Marshstar didn't move from where he stood and neither did anyone else. "You can't go back there. It is dangerous." Lark growled. *He didn't answer his question... He's hiding something. What is he hiding?*

Wildflower butted in, eyes serious. "Marshstar, Lark is right. You can take RockClan back home, but StreamClan is going through." Her tone made you believe that her heart was set on that decision. Lark dipped his head in agreement and led Wildflower and StreamClan away. "We might as well follow." Marshstar muttered, hurrying to follow. I noticed most of RockClan had followed StreamClan anyway.

Lark halted the group just outside of the second Twoleg nest. "Since there are so many cats, I want both of your Clans to go in separate groups. I will lead StreamClan with Wildflower," Marshstar and Wildflower nodded. "Youngest in the center of the group, strongest at the rear and on the outside, leaders at the front."

Lark looked over his shoulder. "Stay close to the walls, be *very* quiet, and aim for the trees at the end of the Twolegplace." As they began to set off, Wolftail suggested something, glancing around for others approval. "So they don't smell us, we should cover ourselves with dead flesh." We all looked at him with disbelief and disgust.

No one else seemed so convinced that it was a good idea, but Lark seemed more than happy to be the first to say yes. "Great idea. If you have any wounds, you cannot put any on you or you will get infected," Lark meowed. Without saying much more, one by one everyone got their fair share of flesh lathered on their pelt from a dog carcass on the side of the Thunderpath.

Rowantail refused to get it on her fur while a few others implied that they had cuts. I felt my stomach churning when Marshstar rubbed it on my flank. "Oh, SoulClan, why me?" I murmured.

As the Clans separated, Crescentmoon passed Hollowkit to Blossomfrost since they were departing. Without saying anything else we all padded away. Lark stayed on the left side of the Thunderpath while Marshstar stuck to the right side. My heart thumped loudly in my chest, making me feel like it was going to burst. My head was pounding and my paws were sore. I just wanted to sleep, eat, and not have to worry for once.

With a silent group, we all headed through the Twolegplace. We stayed close to the Twoleg nests. Some were big and tall, some were smaller, but they were all nice. My fur pricked up as we stalked through the muddy grass. We would have to cross short paths of thin Thunderpaths that ended the Twoleg nest we had passed. Some of the transparent barriers were boarded up with wood, while others were broken or covered with sheets.

Infected Twolegs were limping and staggering everywhere, groaning to nothing in particular. It was terribly horrific. Dogs with chunks of fur and flesh missing had nowhere else to head other than in circles.

Some torn animals were so badly eaten that they were either dragging themselves around or were just laying on the ground moving their head. There were jagged, broken pieces of the transparent barriers everywhere on the Thunderpath and grass. Blood puddles and smears were all over the Thunderpath.

As we came to a turning point, I noticed there were twice as many Twolegs, cats, and dogs walking around. "Snowfern, why are there so many scary Twolegs and dogs walking around?" Dreamkit whimpered. Snowfern didn't answer, only kept going on with the group.

The growling was so loud and spine-chilling; it made my ears ring and my stomach churn in fear. Lionkit began to squeal and then Pebblekit and Hollowkit chimed in. My heart practically stopped. *Oh SoulClan, shut them up! Shut them up!* I pleaded silently, whipping

around to face Ripplecurrent, Stormcloud, and Blossomfrost.

Their faces were filled with astonishment and horror. "Sh, shh, it's okay. Be quiet, please!" Stormcloud whispered to the three. None of them quieted down. Marshstar spat, "Shut those three up!"

The Twolegs, dogs, and cats' attention turned toward us. Shaking, I began to hyperventilate. "We have to run! They've seen us!" I hissed to the group. Marshstar looked around at the cats behind him and before he could answer my plead we all began to bolt when the infected "things" began to speed up to get us.

Tigerstripe pushed Blossomfrost along when she didn't move. She seemed to be in shock which actually did worry me.

Using all the strength we had left, RockClan tore through the grass and bushes with the infected group of animals staggering for us. They came from the front, back, and left side of our Clan. I jumped through a bush, leaped over a white, bloody monster, ducked under a huge infected dog, and dashed through some Twolegs' legs before they could grab me. All the while I didn't check to see if the others were okay.

For once, I didn't think about them. Just me. I didn't care that I was being selfish or uncivil, I just wanted to live.

My heartbeat was racing, my head was pounding harder than ever, and my legs were giving up on me. Just as I began to stumble to a stop, I could see the forest just beyond another turn. Birch, oak, and pine trees laid just out of my legs reach. I looked over my shoulder once I came to a stop.

Most of RockClan bolted past me with panic in their eyes. I couldn't get myself to keep going. My legs were shaky and it felt like someone was tugging on my lungs, like someone was pushing on my chest. Taking huge, fast breaths, I stumbled forward. As much as I wanted to I couldn't get myself to run after RockClan.

"Go, go, go!" Lark yowled in my face. *Where did he come from? Why isn't he with StreamClan?* I wondered as my vision misted with an eery darkness. Staggering down to the blood stained grass, the last

thing I seen was the sight of Lark and infected Twolegs, dogs, and cats coming towards us.

***

Thanks for reading! Comment what you think! Have a good day everyone!

P_A83 out!

Chapter Fifteen

[image]

Whitefeather's POV

Heart thumping, mind whirling, I ran for the wooden fence that marked the end of Twolegplace. I leaped heroically and flew over the wood. Landing safely away from the jaws of the flesh-craving Twolegs and dogs, I sat hunched over in the woods panting. I was lightheaded from the run from the flesh-cravers.

The sound of paw-steps hitting the ground around me made me feel annoyed. *I just want to be alone and be surrounded by silence.* I rolled my eyes with a snarl on my face as the remaining amount of StreamClan came over the fence.

Lark didn't come over the fence with us since he had ditched us for RockClan when someone yowled. Thanks to them, the flesh-cravers headed toward their Thunderpath but instead found us. StreamClan had to bolt away before we all got eaten.

If only Nightshade had tripped. She deserves to die for what she did to Ivysplash!

"Are you okay, Whitefeather?" Ghostglow wheezed. I nodded, breathing through my nose. He narrowed his eyes in concern but didn't press me to talk any more.

Smoketail, Rowantail, Amberpaw, and Dawnflower jumped over the fence after Wolftail, Chipkit, and Nightshade had. Wildflower squeezed through from a hole under the fence. Wildflower was the last to come. "Is everyone in StreamClan here?" She glanced around the group of huffing and wheezing cats looking anxious and worried. No one replied her question.

Before our new leader could say anything more, Marshstar, Blossomfrost, Hollowkit, and Tigerstripe leaped over the fence. They landed on the far right of StreamClan's group. Marshstar

caught his breath before padding over. Ripplecurrent, Stormcloud, Crowflight, Snowfern, and Dreamkit hopped over soon after he approached her. I knew that couldn't possibly be all of them, but no one else came over as we waited.

"Is all of StreamClan here?" Marshstar murmured to Wildflower. She nodded confidently while Marshstar continued, "I'm missing Silverfeather, Sparkpaw, and Shadowflower. Not to mention Lark didn't come over either," Wildflower's ear twitched.

"We will wait here until tomorrow morning. If they aren't back by then, then we will move on." Wildflower dipped her head to Marshstar.

Marshstar looked furious as his tail lashed and his fur spiked up. "If they don't show up by *nightfall*, then I am sending my warriors out to get them." He spat, teeth clenched. Wildflower's eyes flashed but she only bowed her head.

As Marshstar trotted angrily back to his Clan, Smoketail ran from cat to cat to check them for wounds or any sign of illness. He sniffed each cat thoroughly before he moved on. Exhausted and impatient, I waited for him to come to me before I laid down to sleep.
***
Blinking open my eyes, I expected to wake to the forest but instead I woke up to the place I grew up in. Confused, I looked around the silent territory. No one was anywhere to be found. Not even the flesh-craving monsters.

I ran to the river where Ivysplash had drown. By then I realized it was a dream, but I wasn't sure why I could control where I went or why I was in our home territory.

The sound of something coming towards me made me whip around with unsheathed claws. I relaxed all too quickly when my eyes laid on the sparkling SoulClan cats I had waited to see for what seemed to be moons.

Whisperecho and Ivysplash padded towards me with bright smiles on their faces. Whisperecho no longer looked stressed like she had

before she died and Ivysplash still looked as bubbly and childish as ever. They halted in front of me and bowed their heads to me. "I have missed you both so much," I breathed, glancing at Whisperecho and then Ivysplash.

"We know. You look miserable and so selfish. I just wish you would stop holding such foolish grudges on Nightshade." Whisperecho shook her head. *You don't understand! She should have grabbed Ivysplash! It's all her fault! How dare you defend such a stupid she-cat?* Rage pulsed through me.

Astonished, my ears went flat to my head and my tail whipped from side to side. "Stop, Whitefeather. She tried to help me, she really did. I was bound to die whether she went farther in the river or not. It was my time and now it is your time to forgive her and move on." Ivysplash murmured. My gaze softened as I realized how right my sister and mother were.

"But we didn't come to tell you to forgive. We need you to pass this prophecy on when you wake," Whisperecho's voice turned grave and serious. Curious, I nodded.

"In the forest there will be Zinnia. Zinnia has the power to cure the illness in your veins and the death that lingers and causes the Clans pain." They meowed in sync. I blinked, unsure of what it meant. *Does this mean we have to search for the rare flower named zinnia?* I wondered, giving them an uncertain look.

"Goodbye, Whitefeather. Protect Ghostglow for me." Whisperecho purred. Ivysplash touched noses with me as she began to fade. Her nose was so cold it sent chills down my spine.

Before I could even plead for her and Whisperecho to stay, they were gone. The world around me began to fade, too, and soon I found myself in the dangerous and heart-wrenching forest once more.

***

I jolted awake to thumping and groaning. The sun was just sliding back up the pink and blue sky. I looked over my shoulder with my ears straight up; the sound of the flesh-cravers must've woken me. My mother and sisters' voices rang in my ears. *In the forest there will*

be Zinnia. Zinnia has the power to cure the illness in your veins and the death that lingers and causes the Clans pain.

I felt a pang in my heart when I realized how much I missed them both. Shaking my head to clear my thoughts, I hurried over to where Wildflower had been sleeping to tell her about the prophecy.

"What's the rush for, Whitefeather?" Smoketail yawned as he arched his back in a large stretch. Groggily he met me half way.

"I got a prophecy from Whisperecho and Ivysplash. I think it means there is a cure for all of us to be immune or something..." I narrowed my eyes as I thought about the prophecy again. Smoketail blinked at me in shock, excitement, and a touch of disbelief.

"They said: 'In the forest there will be Zinnia. Zinnia has the power to cure the illness in your veins and the death that lingers and causes pain.'" I echoed the words straight from my mother and sisters mouth.

Smoketail looked past me. I assumed he was thinking it over. "Was that a prophecy?" Marshstar asked. I looked over my shoulder at the tall brown tom. I nodded to him and realized Wildflower had woken up, too.

Wolftail hurried over with Chipkit scurrying behind him. "Wildflower, since Seastar is most likely... er... dead, then shouldn't you make yourself leader?" He asked. Chipkit nodded eagerly.

"It won't be professional, but I will." She meowed with a nod. *Does no one care about the prophecy?* I wondered.

"Everyone in StreamClan gather around to hear my word." Wildflower meowed. The sleeping StreamClan cats lifted their heads from their sleep and staggered over to the crowd. Ghostglow sat beside me with his fur sticking up in all places. He must've realized his fur was messy when I kept staring because he rolled his eyes and looked at Wildflower.

The sound of the infected Twolegs hitting the fence distracted most of us as Wildflower began. "Seastar was ill and I regret leaving her

by herself to wait for Sootclaw's patrol, but she is in a better place now and we must move on. I will be StreamClan's new leader. From this day forward, you will all know me as Wildstar. Do not cheer me on since the infected are just beyond that fence." All of StreamClan glanced at each other with an awkward tension hovering around us.

"I have been thinking about our new deputy ever since we left our territory. Wolftail, I am making you StreamClan's deputy. I trust you will help me protect our Clan with your life." The brown-and-black tom nodded with pride, amazement, and hysteria gleamed in his gaze.

Wildstar and Wolftail touched shoulders and then they stood side-by-side. They bowed to us and we bowed to them. "From now until this infectious virus is gone, this is the way our ceremonies shall go," Wildstar announced.

As the crowd separated, I noticed Shadowflower, Sparkpaw, Silverfeather, and even Lark were back. SIlverfeather was sleeping beside Smoketail. She didn't look too good. Amberpaw and Sparkpaw were sitting together. Sparkpaw had herbs covering her eye which made me very puzzled. I assumed she had tripped or something because she looked a bit more cheery. I'm sure she would be worried if an infected dog or cat had scratched her.

Padding up to Wildstar and Wolftail, I brought up the prophecy again. "What are we going to do about this prophecy?" I meowed. At the word 'prophecy', Marshstar trotted over with curiosity glittering in his green eyes.

"I think every patrol that goes out should look for this flower." Wildstar bowed her head to me. Lark hurried over from RockClan's side. "Flower? What flower?" I noticed his skull protector was off, making it easier to see his face.

I blinked at him as Wildstar answered his question. "Whitefeather got a prophecy about a rare zinnia flower. Why?" She cocked her head to the side in suspicion.

"That flower can make us immune and any kin that comes after our

generation..." Lark explained. "Funny thing is that I decided to drag you all along with me because of this flower. I knew you Clan cats were smart."
***
Thanks for reading guys! The picture below is a zinnia flower! Pretty right? You'll be surprised with what comes next! Comment what you think!

P_A83 out!

Allegiances

RockClan:

Leader-

Marshstar; dark brown tom with dark green eyes.

Deputy-

Silverfeather; thin, silver she-cat with dark silver stripes, left blue eye and right green.

Medicine Cat-

Shadowflower; black pelt with white spots on her flank, small she-cat with very light blue eyes.

Warriors-

Crowflight; grey and black tabby tom, amber eyes. Apprentice-Sparkpaw

Stormcloud; grey tom with blue eyes, Crowflight's brother, Ripplecurrent's mate.

Tigerstripe; brown tabby tom with black stripes, one black paw, blue eyes.

Blossomfrost; light fluffy brown fur with white ears and tail tip, pale green eyes.

Apprentices-

Sparkpaw; brown tabby she-cat with white front paws, amber eyes.

Queens-

Snowfern; grey with white patches and green eyes, she-cat. **Dreamkit**; pale grey she-kit with green eyes.

Ripplecurrent; orange tabby with amber eyes, she-cat, **Lionkit**; fluffy orange tom with white paws, amber eyes, **Pebblekit**; grey with darker flecks, blue eyes, she-kit, **Hollowkit**; black-and-white tom with light blue eyes, Moonfur's only surviving son.

Elders-

Currently None-

****

StreamClan:

Leader-

Wildstar; white calico she-cat with amber eyes.

Deputy-

Wolftail; large black and brown patched tom, hazel eyes, Nightshade's brother, Chipkit's father. Apprentice- Thornpaw

Medicine Cat-

Smoketail; grey tabby tom with a blue tint, dark blue eyes and barely noticeable scars.

Warriors-

Nightshade; black with dark grey paws, yellow eyes, she-cat.

Rowantail; semi-long dark ginger fur, she-cat with a plump tail and white tail tip.

Dawnflower; long light ginger fur, black spots around her blue eyes, she-cat, Rowantail's sister and Amberpaw's mother.

Ghostglow; white tom with glowing yellow eyes, Whitefeather's

father. Apprentice- Amberpaw

Whitefeather; white tom, right yellow eye and left blue eye.

Crescentmoon; black with blue eyes, she-cat. Apprentice- Whisperpaw

Blackwind; jet black, light green eyes, she-cat, Thornpaw and Whisperpaw's mother.

Apprentices-

Amberpaw; small red-brown she-cat with darker stripes on her tail, amber eyes.

Whisperpaw; silver tabby she-cat, amber eyes.

Thornpaw; black tom, white underbelly, green eyes, Whisperpaw's brother.

Queens-

Chipkit; brown tom with black ears. (No mother.)

Elders-

Currently None-

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Cats Outside the Clans:

Lark; black with grey markings and many scars, crystal blue eyes, tom. (Currently with Clans.)

Firefly; white she-cat with pearl green eyes.

Misty; grey-and-white she-cat with dark blue eyes.

Foxtail; dark ginger she-cat with a fluffy tail, white tail tip, yellow eyes.

Chapter Sixteen

Marshstar's POV

With clouds hovering over the grey morning sky, we set out on our first patrol in the forest. Crowflight, Tigerstripe, and Blossomfrost came out on a patrol with me while Stormcloud stayed back to protect the queens and the ill. Wildstar and Dawnflower stayed behind, too, to keep Rowantail from doing something stupid. She wasn't right in the head anymore. Silverfeather couldn't come out on a patrol because she was so dehydrated and tired.

Nightshade led a patrol with Whitefeather, Crescentmoon, and Blackwind beside us. The forest was overgrown with bracken, ferns, and thorn bushes, but it was nice to be out of the hot sun. As we kept going forward in silence, Blackwind suddenly halted. Her ears were straining to hear something. "Do you hear that?" She murmured. We all exchanged unsure glances.

"I hear a stream!" She exclaimed, bolting past the patrol. *A stream?*

We all trotted close behind the jet black she-cat. As we came to a small clearing, we all gasped in shock as we found a tempting stream. It sparkled and made my mouth water. Trees leaned over the edge of the ground as well as yellowed grass. One big rock was in the center of the river.

"Can we trust it? Last time we had a drink from a river we lost five cats." Whitefeather snarled, staying clear of the water. I leaned over the dry dirt and watched the water swirl by. It was so clear you could see the pebbles and boulders on the bottom of it. As I watched, I noticed little fish swimming down the stream.

I leaped back in shock. "It's good to drink! There are fish in the stream," I turned around just as Blackwind jumped into the stream. The water splashed back up at me and the other patrols. She dunked her head under the water then broke the surface again. She shook her head and paddled up the stream. Crescentmoon and

Nightshade joined in while Whitefeather craned his neck to take a drink. My patrol took as much water in as they could as well.

Nightshade got out of the water first and gestured to them to follow her. "We're going to go tell the Clans the good news," Nightshade chirped, bouncing away with her patrol of dripping cats following close behind. Whitefeather looked less than excited, but he did look happy to have a decent drink. *Maybe we should claim this river...* I thought, licking my lips. Thinking it over, I realized RockClan was horribly short on cats. *We don't need a battle right now.*

I lifted my head when a nice breeze blew across the stream. Closing my eyes, I let the breeze blow freely through my thick pelt. I got a whiff of something unknown through the breeze, making me open my eyes. I unsheathed my claws. *Nothing infected can get into this stream or we won't have a water source again!* I thought, hopping over the stream.

"Where are you going, Marshstar?" Blossomfrost called over the stream. I looked over my shoulder to the three confused cats. "I smell prey. You three hunt over there. I will be right back!" I promised, trotting away. Thankfully, they didn't argue.

The smell got stronger as I headed deeper into the forest. I heard something run away from where I was going. Whatever it was had left the bushes swaying. I assumed it was a rabbit but it left a cat scent.

The bushes behind me moved so I whipped around. Nothing was there. I swallowed and unsheathed my claws. The sound of bushes moving behind me made me swing around again. This time a small, mysterious, bengal she-cat stood there. Her green eyes were filled with curiosity, energy, and happiness. I leaped back in shock, not expecting anything to be there. My fur stood up along my spine.

I felt a growl creep up my throat. "What are you doing here? This is-" I snarled, stopping myself half way through my sentence when I realized we hadn't claimed this territory at all. The bengal she-cat gazed up at me with her head cocked to the side, clueless. "Why are you here? Go away or we'll force you to."

She only blinked up at me. She didn't seem to be offended, scared, or even fazed.

"What is a 'RockClan' and a 'StreamClan'?" The she-cat asked. Her voice was squeaky as if she was only a kit. I narrowed my eyes at her. "It's a group of cats that live together." I replied, lashing my tail.

"Who are you?" She gazed up at me with wide eyes, sniffing.

I narrowed my eyes at the small, mysterious she-cat. "No, who are *you*?" I growled. She didn't reply, only sized me up silently as if I hadn't of asked her anything. *She is one clueless she-cat.* I thought, rolling my eyes. She only stared at me. We awkwardly stared into each other's eyes for what seemed to be days, though she didn't look to be awkward at all.

Giving up on her answering first, I decided to reply. "I'm Marshstar, leader of RockClan. And you are...?" She wriggled her nose up at me but didn't answer my question. Feeling agitated, I flicked my tail and decided to leave. "I have to go now. Go away from our territory or you'll be fought off." She nodded once to me but didn't move. I backed away and nodded back to her awkwardly.

I turned around and shook my head. *Something is wrong with her,* I thought as I rolled my eyes again. The sudden sound of her bolting off made me whip around. She was gone with no trace of her ever being there.
***
The infected Twolegs and dogs banged at the fence mercilessly. Chipkit cowered under Wolftail's chest, whimpering. Ripplecurrent's kits whined and cried, too. I dropped a robin in the fresh-kill hole after Tigerstripe, Blossomfrost, and Crowflight had dropped a mouse, squirrel, and sparrow into it. "Oh, great SoulClan! We can eat for once!" Stormcloud gasped.

Though I was quiet, everyone else was cheery with the amount of fresh-kill we had all caught. The infected "things" behind the fence suddenly stopped clawing at the fence. It sounded like they found something else to try to eat because their growls echoed in the Twolegplace. I hopped up onto the top of the fence and watched

them all stumbled toward two cats as they bolted toward our fence.

No! Go away! I wanted to scream, but I didn't want to attract the infected.

Two she-cats, a pure white and a grey-and-white, leaped over the fence and landed harshly on the ground closer to RockClan's side. I jumped down and held my chin high. All the cats exchanged puzzled looks at each other but no one said anything. Wildstar stopped beside me, her eyes flashing with hostility. As she opened her mouth to speak, the two she-cats burst out in cries.

"Please help us! Our friend is stuck under a fallen fence! We can't lift it by ourselves!" The grey-and-white she-cat begged. They both looked like they hadn't cleaned their pelts for moons. Their eyes were wide and their tails lashed frantically.

Wildstar spoke before I could even think over a decision. "You will have to think of another way. We don't help strangers, we have our own problems. Leave now or you will be fed to the infected!" Lark hurried up in beside me. "Now, now, Wildstar. I stopped to help you. I'm sure we can help them."

Furious, Wildstar's lip curled in defence. "You only stopped to help us to *use* us!" Lark's tail twitched but he didn't reply.

"Don't be so selfish, Wildstar." Ripplecurrent groaned from where she laid, feeding her three now quiet kits.

The two strangers looked at each other. "We don't have a lot of time! Please help us!" The white cat begged while the grey-and-white she-cat nodded eagerly.

I nodded. "Crowflight, Tigerstripe, come with me. We will help them get their friend. Stormcloud, Blossomfrost, I want you two to search for that flower and move our camp by that river." Tigerstripe looked jealous as Blossomfrost nodded. Tigerstripe stood at the fence with a small groan. Crowflight joined him. Stormcloud, Blossomfrost, and Ripplecurrent grabbed one of her kits while Snowfern grabbed her own. Sparkpaw followed close behind them while Shadowflower grabbed her small amount of herbs. Our

medicine cat let Silverfeather lean on her as they headed out.

Wildstar didn't say anything. "Ghostglow and I will join you." Wolftail announced. Surprised, Ghostglow looked over his shoulder from his conversation with Whitefeather and hurried over. Wildstar looked like she was going to rip her deputy's head off. Clenching her teeth, she whipped around and ordered her Clan to follow RockClan and claim the other side of the river.

When I looked back at the two she-cats, I saw they were already waiting on the fence.
***
Sorry for no updates guys! They shut the internet off for a few days... Hope you enjoyed! Have a good day everyone!

P_A83 out!

Chapter Seventeen

[image]

Ghostglow's POV

The grey-and-white and white she-cats led us away from our fence without saying a word. Wolftail and I ran beside Marshstar while Tigerstripe and Crowflight took up the rear. The white one was for sure a kittypet in her past. You could tell by her bright pink collar that was wrapped around her neck as if she was just waiting to be choked by her Twolegs. The other one had a green collar. I assumed she was living with the white she-cat.

"Speed up or we'll get eaten!" Tigerstripe snapped loudly, glancing over his shoulder. Obeying his command, we took off harder and faster. The infected stumbled toward us faster than I had ever seen them go. *They must be hungry.* I figured, feeling my spine crawl with uneasiness.

The two she-cats ran over a patch of grass and went behind a Twolegnest. The left side of the fence had caved in and was broken off of the rest of the fence. It was lying on top of a ginger ball of fur. I wasn't too sure *how* the fence fell, but it didn't really matter. "Misty, Firefly, is that you?" The ginger cat murmured, straining to look at us. *So that's what their names are.* As we hurried over to assist the third she-cat, I noticed claw marks from in front of her. She must have tried to claw her way out of underneath the fence.

She was on her side, her hind legs and tail stuck under the fence. "It'll be okay, Foxtail, we got help!" Misty breathed.

"The infected are coming, we need to hurry." Marshstar demanded with unsheathed claws. Without any warning, Wolftail squeezed his lower back under the fence and gestured with his head for the others to follow. Crowflight and Tigerstripe went under on the opposite side while I joined Wolftail. Marshstar grabbed Foxtail by the scruff and began to drag her out as we slowly went from crouching to a standing position. Firefly and Misty stood back and

watched with wide, hopeful eyes.

My legs shook as we lifted the heavy fence. *I'm getting too old for this.* Foxtail slowly climbed out from under the fence then we lowered the fence until we could safely leave from under it.

Foxtail shook out her long, dark ginger fur and dipped her head to Marshstar. Her tail was fluffy and had a white tail tip just like a fox. "Thank you." She murmured. *Good thing she isn't whiny like her companions.* Marshstar nodded once and began to take a different route around the Twolegnest to get away from the infected. We all followed.

I sensed the three kittypets following, too. I flicked my ear but didn't say anything. When I looked over at them, I saw Misty and Firefly letting Foxtail lean on them. No one said anything to them as we began to dash back to our fence.
***
As the others hopped over the fence, I let Firefly put Foxtail on my back. I leaped up onto the fence and then down onto the ground. Foxtail got off of my back and leaned onto Firefly again. "Thank you again for helping Foxtail!" Misty mewed to Marshstar with gleaming eyes. Firefly nodded from beside her.

Hungry and exhausted, we all traveled into the woods to the stream. I had to follow Marshstar because I wasn't sure where exactly we were going.

In a few short moments we were at the stream. My mouth watered. I jumped into the water gently and waded slowly through the water, savoring the stream. It felt so odd to have water slithering through my fur and the pebbles between my pads. I stopped in the middle of the stream and took in all the water I needed.

"So what are you wild cats doing here? The three of us used to come in the woods to play around... We've never seen you before." Foxtail asked, her eyes narrowed in curiosity. I glanced over at her as I finished drinking. Licking my lips, I listened from the stream.

Marshstar answered them. The three homeless cats were sitting around him since they knew no one else. "Well, you all know about

the strange illness going around... Those "things" destroyed our kin and our home. We decided to leave when Lark came." The RockClan leader explained. Marshstar looked over at the scarred tom. He had his skull protector beside him, the muzzle pointing towards him. He glanced up quickly at the mention of his name, fresh-kill hanging from his mouth.

The three she-cats purred. Lark licked the meat from his mouth and blinked at them. They turned away and he kept eating.

"Do you fight them? Is it scary?" Misty asked, leaning in. "The last one we fought didn't seem to be wavered by our claws, so we just... ran away," Marshstar meowed, looking slightly agitated.

The three cats didn't seem to notice that he was slightly angry. "Let us stay with you! We don't have a home anymore! We can catch our own food and make our own bedding and-" Firefly whined, standing up. Her fur was on end; she looked frightened and desperate. "We will leave when everything gets better, we promise!"

The RockClan leader looked around at his few warriors. They only shrugged. Marshstar's face seemed to say, *Do they really think this illness is going to go away that easily?* Even with the flower prophecy - that had spread around like a wildfire among the Clan cats - no one was too sure about the virus just diminishing. "Maybe they could be a good use. As long as they carry their own weight, then I'm sure they would be a good addition to our Clan for the meantime," Silverfeather rasped from beside Shadowflower. Marshstar flicked his ear and then nodded to the three she-cats.

"As long as you three learn to fight and hunt and make your own nest, then yes," Marshstar didn't look too happy to be letting kittypets stay in his Clan but the kittypets were unbelievably excited.

I hopped out of the water on StreamClan's side and let out a loud purr. I could feel the glare from Marshstar burning through my back but I didn't care.

As I padded away from the stream, I shook out each paw to get rid of the water. I groaned in impatience as pine needles got stuck in

between my toes. "For SoulClan's sake, it *is* a sign, Wildstar!" I heard Whitefeather snarl. I glanced up and paused. Wildstar looked astonished to be challenged so greatly by a young warrior. "She needs to be exiled or-or *something!* SoulClan sent a sign and we need to act on it!"

I hurried over. "What are you complaining about?" I looked from Wildstar to Whitefeather for an answer. I noticed the light purple flower with a yellow center laying at Whitefeather's paws. I confirmed it was deadly nightshade. "Your son found deadly nightshade on patrol and he thinks it's "a sign from SoulClan" when it is natural for it to grow in the forest!" Wildstar hissed, trying to keep calm. I realized it wasn't working too well for her.

"Whitefeather, come with me. We're going on a hunt. We will be back eventually." I announced, nudging Whitefeather away.

I could feel the tension coming from Whitefeather as he padded quickly away with his head down. "Whitefeather," I murmured, "You know Nightshade tried her best to save your sister. Ivysplash and Whisperecho would be disappointed if they knew you were holding such a foolish grudge." Whitefeather looked up and nodded once, but continued the silent treatment.

As we passed by a big oak tree with gnarled roots sticking out of the ground, I got a strong, new whiff of an unknown cat. Mixed with it was freshly killed prey. The sweet, tangy smell blew by in the breeze. Whitefeather seemed to have noticed it too because his nose was wriggling and his tail was fluffed up. Without even telling him to do so, he began to track down the cat beside me.

We followed it around the great oak tree and down a small hill to find a Bengal she-cat chowing down on a rabbit. Her tail tip danced around while her ears scanned for noises.

Letting my growl raise up my throat, I circled the small Bengal she-cat. She only glanced up at us with a clueless look in her green eyes. "Hello! Are you with Saw-a-Marsh?" She mewed. Whitefeather and I exchanged a confused glance.

"Are you a Rock-cat like Saw-a-Marsh?" Neither of us knew what

she was talking about until it hit me that she was talking about RockClan and Marshstar. "Don't you mean *Marshstar* from *RockClan?*" Whitefeather stopped circling her.

The Bengal she-cat shrugged and took another bite of the rabbit. She looked merry and unfazed by our intimidation. "It doesn't matter! Why are you eating our prey?" The she-cat looked up at me and licked her lips. Bengal tipped her head to the side.

She purred, "I don't see your name on it, Snowball!" My ears went tight to my skull.

I narrowed my eyes at the she-cat and took a step forward, my claws unsheathed. "Are you alone or are we sitting ducks?"

"I'm alone. My family died to the sickness going around and when they came back alive I threw them into the stream!" She stood up and fluffed out her fur. I sheathed my claws. Beginning to panic, I almost bolted away to camp to tell them not to drink the water, but Bengal continued. "Downstream it is stronger so I threw them down there."

Bengal didn't look fazed at all by the topic. Something had to be wrong with her. Either she had so much trauma that she just bottled it up and became insane, or she was too young to realize her family was whipped out.

I narrowed my eyes and lashed my tail as Whitefeather sniffed around. My lip curled up in sudden hostility. *We can't lose our stream to some stupid she-cat! We don't need a stray to come into our Clan! I don't want to be like RockClam, bringing in desperate cats just because you are low on them.*

"Get out of here. Get out of the territory and if we ever see you again, we'll tear you to shreds!" I spat, unsheathing my claws again. Her ears went back. She glanced quickly at my son as he mirrored me and then back at me. Her eyes were gleaming with shock, confusion, and hurt. Whitefeather hissed at her and she bolted.

I watched her disappear before I let myself relax. "Different Clan or not, I am going to confront Marshstar about this. I will inform

Wildstar and double the patrols." Whitefeather nodded, his eyes very serious and coldhearted. As we headed back, I felt a pang of regret in my chest for scaring the poor cat.

Chapter Eighteen

Sparkdust's POV

"From this day forward, you will be known as Mistnose. May the three of you become fine, fearless, and strong warriors." Marshstar finished, touching Mistnose's shoulder. Misty had been given her full name and so had her sister, Firefly and their neighbor Foxtail. Foxtail was given the name Foxtuft and Firefly was given the name Fireflywing. It had been half a moon since Marshstar allowed them into the Clan.

The three had made major progress. Mistnose and Fireflywing had quit their whiny voices when the warriors had complained about it. Meanwhile, Foxtuft was strong and independent from the beginning.

I had gotten my warrior name a few days before then. I prayed to Blazeflame that she was proud of me, even though deep down I already knew she was.

"Dreamkit, step forward," Marshstar demanded, standing tall and serious. Dreamkit scampered over with her pelt prepared and her eyes gleaming with excitement and pride. I glanced over at her mother, Snowfern. She was once very depressed and devastated ever since Rosekit and Thunderkit had passed on, but as her only surviving young kit stood in front of our leader, she became very pleased for her beautiful and confident kit.

Marshstar flicked his tail and lowered his gaze. "Dreamkit, you are now six moons old, meaning you are ready to become an apprentice. From now until you become a warrior, you will be known as Dreampaw. Your siblings are looking down on you with pride, little one," Dreampaw's little tail twitched. "Blossomfrost will be your mentor. I trust she will give you all the skills you will need to survive the deadly infection spreading." Blossomfrost hurried over to touch noses with her new apprentice.

"Dreampaw! Foxtuft! Fireflywing! Mistnose!" RockClan cheered merrily, all of the warriors in sync. I looked over at Lark - who was sitting beside me. He was cheering along with us.

Marshstar raised his tail for silence after the ones up front had taken their places again. "Now lose the collars. You can hang them on a branch or in a bush or even throw them in the river, I don't care. Just don't wear them," Marshstar waited for Fireflywing and Mistnose to take them off patiently. Silverfeather took her place beside Marshstar. She was healthy again. Her silver pelt was shiny, her face was full, her body was getting her muscle back, and her eyes were filled with delight instead of shock and sickness.

Half the Clan had bet that she was going to die by the next quarter-moon. We all assumed Stormcloud would become deputy. I felt bad for having no faith in our deputy, but at the end of the day, who's to say I won't die either?

"Sparkdust, you haven't lead a patrol yet. Take Stormcloud and Snowfern with you upstream." I nodded and collected the two as Blossomfrost, Dreampaw, and Tigerstripe were announced to leave downstream. Lark joined our patrol without a word said. I gave him a confused glance but he only gestured for us to continue on.

The seasons were changing drastically. The leaves were falling and shriveling up, the air was becoming chiller, and the motivation to get up was lessening. A small breeze blew through my thin pelt, sending shivers down my spine.

I sped up my pace without realizing it as we followed the stream upwards. Feeling noble and honored to be leading my first patrol, I lead them confidently. I looked to the left at a suddent movement. Amberpaw was leading a patrol with Blackwind and Chipkit. I assumed Chipkit was now Chippaw with Blackwind as a mentor and that Amberpaw got her warrior name.

Amberpaw was practically bolting away from Blackwind and Chippaw away from the stream. "Amberthroat! Wait for us!" Chippaw squealed, running after the halted warrior. *Amberthroat... What a pretty name.* I shook my head to get rid of the thought. I couldn't be disloyal to my Clan at a time of need.

We climbed a small hill silently. Snowfern was panting by the time we came to the top. I assumed it was because she wasn't used to being a warrior anymore. We sniffed the air and all at once, I got a huge whiff of a rotting carcass. I knew it wasn't a cat, but an animal I had never met before.

Lark and Stormcloud seemed to have smelled it as well. "We should follow it, Sparkdust. There might be infected cats or dogs roaming around." Lark advised, his eyes narrowed to a deadly slit. I bowed my head to him and trotted after the trail of the reeking smell.

The patrol only had to go a few tail-lengths to find a huge, light brown animal. It had hooves like that of a sheep. It had bones like branches coming out of its skull and cloudy, black eyes. The dead animal had a long, bony muzzle, a thick dark brown nose, and long, muscular hind legs. One hing leg was split open, a white, glistening bone jabbing out of its skin. It looked like it had been trying to run away from something. It's chin was high, its branches almost touching its shoulders. Their front legs were skinnier but they still had quite a bit of muscle.

It looked like some kind of a majestic creature. I was fascinated at how big and strange it was. The neck was torn open as well as its stomach, letting their pink insides hang out and smear on the undergrowth. I looked past the creature.

The ground behind it was torn up, looking as if it was running until it fell. Lark was examining the forest beyond the scene. "I think there are some infected animals near here." He pointed out without looking at us. His fur was on end and his tail was lashing from side to side.

The buzzing of flies flying around the creature annoyed me. I padded away to stand by Lark.

My ears went up straight and instantly my claws unsheathed when the sound of something growling came from behind the trees' trunks. My heartbeat sped up when two infected cats staggered towards us. One was once black with chunks of fur missing from its body. Dried blood from decaying flesh and bite wounds had caused its ragged pelt to clump up. The other was orange with a missing

ear and eye. Blood had dried over its entire right side of its face. Its flank was freshly bleeding as if it had recently died and came back.

Lark jumped right in without saying a thing. He landed on top of the slow black cat and clawed at its face from behind it. The cat collapsed and groaned, trying to bite him with snapping, drooling jaws. The orange cat hurried over to Lark. Snowfern crouched behind the brown dead creature, trembling and whining. Stormcloud smashed into the other cat before it could get to Lark. I joined in heroically.

I helped Lark attack the black one, aiming for its face. It stood up and threw Lark off of him and stumbled towards me. It was emotionless and took every hit I gave him as if I was a weakling.

Smashing him in the face several times, I began to grow tired. I backed away the opposite way of the stream and tripped over a stick. The black cat opened its jaws to bite my leg. Blood and pink drool dripped on my chest and neck. Frozen from shock, I stayed put out of horror. Its breath was horrid and putrid. Blood sprayed onto my face and chest as a stick pierce through the back of its head and through its left eye. The monster went limp instantly, blood dripping through the wound and through its wide open jaws.

Breathing heavily, I scampered to my paws. Lark let go of the stick from his mouth and let the infected dead cat drop. The orange cat was still fighting Stormcloud. Lark tried to get the stick from out of the black cats head, but it was completely stuck.

I ran over to Stormclouds opponent and smashed his head against the tree it was walking past. Over and over I hit the cats bloody head against the tree trunk until its head was jelly. An explosion of blood and brains was all over the trees' trunk. Everyone around me was completely still with awe. Their faces were saying, "Did such a young warrior do such a thing?"

I backed away, panting heavily.

Exhausted, frightened, and weak, we retreated back to camp on wobbly legs.

When I entered the camp, they all gasped. Shadowflower dashed over to me as soon as they laid eyes on me. "Are you bit?" She asked, sniffing my body. I glanced to my paws and realized I was a bloody mess.

I looked at Marshstar who was arguing with Whitefeather, Ghostglow, and Wildstar. "Well?" Shadowflower growled loudly. I glanced over at her without a sure expression, just a blank face. "No. We got in a fight with two infected cats. Lark and I killed them." She narrowed her eyes at me but reluctantly nodded slowly. Shadowflower sniffed the others thoroughly for a few moments to confirm no one was bit.

She hurried off to Marshstar. "Double the patrols upstream. Sparkdust's patrol found two infected cats, both of them were killed. They're caked in blood." She muttered to him. In the middle of Wildstar's argument, Marshstar glanced over his shoulder and examined my patrol briefly. He looked back to Shadowflower and murmured something to her.

I wondered what Marshstar was arguing about with Wildstar and two of her warriors.

Shadowflower meowed while she passed me, "Go clean yourselves up downstream." I bowed my head. "Lark, Stormcloud, we have to go clean ourselves up. Snowfern, you didn't have a part in the fighting but you can come with us if you would like,"

Snowfern shook her head quickly and laid down. She watched her tail twitch with wide eyes. Lark lead Stormcloud and I downstream. As we passed by Marshstar, I overheard the word "loner" and something about him being involved being said. I didn't think anything of it.

A frosty breeze blew by harshly. The three of us were quiet until Stormcloud broke the silence. "Leaf-bare is coming quickly," He muttered. I nodded in agreement.

The three of us headed silently from there downstream. We didn't stop until we couldn't see our camp any longer. Sighing, I quietly stepped into the stream. I found it hard to stay in place with the

current pulling at my legs. I shuddered from the intensely bitter stream. My paws began to go numb. Stormcloud and Lark hopped in as if it was nothing. Stormcloud slowly lowered himself into the cold water while Lark just did it and got it over with. The blood on our pelts came out easier than we expected so we got to rush back to camp quickly.

As we entered camp, I noticed Marshstar was furious about something. I assumed it was about the argument with Wildstar. All the patrols were back now and as I examined them all, I found out not one of them had found the zinnia flower we needed so badly.
***
Sorry for slow updates guys! Remember I won't be online most weekends, but I am always online on the weekdays.

Hope you enjoyed, have a good week of school!

P_A83 out!

Chapter Nineteen

[image]

Thornpaw's POV

Waking up to Whisperpaw curled up next to me made me feel loved from the moment I woke up. I wondered why I woke up, though. It was still dark and gloomy out; mist was swirling around our bodies as everyone slept soundly. Blackwind was sprawled out and snoring softly behind Whisperpaw and I.

I pricked my ears up at the sound of someone talking. Peering around, I noticed Rowantail was whispering to what seemed to be herself. "Voices... voices... shut up!" She hissed. Dawnflower's tail twitched beside her. She hit her sister on the nose with her tail tip to shut her up. Rowantail's ginger fur was matted and sticking up. I gulped. *We're all going crazy.*

Deciding not to go back to sleep, I hurried over to the fresh-kill pile. Only a starling and a pigeon remained in the pile but I was more than grateful to have at least something. I grabbed the starling and sat down by myself.

Chowing down after removing the feathers, I watched the sun go up the sky slowly and surely, brightening the world around me. It didn't brighten much up with the thick, light grey cloud covering the sky.

I swallowed the last morsels of bird meat I could get from its bones and licked my lips. Feeling guilty for not saving any for Whisperpaw or Blackwind, I quickly dug a hole and buried it so they wouldn't know it was me who took the starling. *No one would believe Rowantail anyway,* I thought as I watched her eyeball me from behind Dawnflower's flank. Her eyes glowed menacingly and her tail whipped from side to side.

Time dragged by slowly as I sat near the stream observing StreamClan. No one made any real dens yet because Wildstar and

Marshstar believed we would be going back home after we found the flower. We did have moss nests, though. Lark didn't seem so sure we would be leaving this place anytime soon.

I could hear the infected Twolegs moaning from the fence. It sent shivers down my spine. Not even the streams churning sounds could drown out the deafening sound of their deep voices from beyond the fence.

Whisperpaw began to stir so I instantly hurried over to get her up. "Whisperpaw!" I hissed, nudging her softly with my nose. "Whisperpaw, get up! Lets go check out the fence!" She blinked open her eyes and looked around. She groaned in resistance to waking but reluctantly sat up. I bounced a few tail-lengths away. "Come on, I want to see the fence!" I waited with my tail and ears up high for my groggy sister to hurry over. Her eyes were half shut but as we traveled away Whisperpaw was visibly growing more excited by the heartbeat. We began to dash downstream until our territory came to an end.

Without thinking, I left our territory. I thought it was okay because it was the edge of RockClans territory. With Whisperpaw at my side, we bounded toward the noisy fence. It didn't take long to get back to the muddy clearing where the pine, red alders, and spruce trees ended.

The infected Twolegs banged at the fence mercilessly. The rotten fence squeaked and threatened to fall as their weight became unbearable for it to hold. The bare - yet bloody - paws of the tall Twolegs grabbed the top of the fence and clawed at the wood on our side. Their claws were broken off, their paws were greyish-pink, and blood had stained the dark wooden fence as they reached for anything warmblooded.

Whisperpaw crouched down behind me with her claws unsheathed.

"I think we should go..." She whimpered. I was frozen to the spot. Her voice echoed to the fence and suddenly the Twolegs went wild. They banged at the fence with as much force as they could muster. "Oh no," I sobbed, backing away.

"What do we do, what do we do?" Whisperpaw fretted, her voice growing louder, "We can't get rid of them now... They heard us! That fence won't hold them back forever! What if they get loose? It will be our fault when the Clans are killed!" She began to vibrate violently.

Beginning to hyperventilate, the world around me grew black with fear. "We have to find that flower before they get loose!" I bleated, bolting off. Whisperpaw hurried after me. The sound of infected Twolegs smashing at the fence and the feeling of a pair of eyes gazing at us as we ran back made me run faster and harder than I ever thought capable.

***

Wolftail, Amberthroat, Foxtuft, and I hurried north of our camp. We had left when the sun was quarter way up and now we were almost to the edge of the territory. When announcing the patrols, Wolftail had advised everyone to be aware of the Bengal she-cat that was roaming around. Curiosity was getting the best of me; I was hoping to see her.

Whisperpaw and I didn't tell anyone about what had happened and no one questioned it. No one was even up when we got back.

Wolftail's voice brought me out of my distant thoughts. "Leaf-bare is coming quick. We need to find that flower before leaf-fall gets to it," Wolftail commented, his breath billowing from his mouth as he talked. Mist swirled as we padded on. *What a strange day,* I thought as I watched the mist swirl. Birds tweeted in the tree tops, making me gaze around to find them. I was determined to catch as much prey as possible and to not let any prey get away.

Wolftail halted the patrol to sniff around. I sniffed along with him, mirroring my mentor. "What do you smell, Thornpaw?" He asked, glancing down at me. I opened my mouth to take a sniff. Instantly I was hit with a near scent of a bird. My eyes opened wide. "I smell a bird!" I meowed. He nodded and told the rest of the patrol to search elsewhere. They headed off. I sniffed along the ground and tracked down a robin. It pecked at a patch of flowers that was under a thick western hemlock. My first thought was, *It's the zinnia flower! Get*

away from my flowers!

I stalked quickly and quietly towards it from behind the robin and then pounced. It was so busy trying to get seeds that it didn't sense me coming for it. I landed perfectly on the robin but it didn't die. Feeling panicked, I continuously stepped on the bird as it flapped its wings and squawked. Wolftail hurried over and gave it a killing bite before it could get out of my paws.

"Good job," He praised, bowing his head to me. *Good job? You got to my kill before I could...* I wanted to whine but I held my tongue. He picked up the small bundle of flowers and began to head away. I grabbed the robin by its broken neck and carried it away in behind my bulky mentor.

He stopped and looked over his shoulder. Wolftail dropped the bundle of flowers. I looked up at him and dropped the bird at the sound of groaning. I bolted in behind Wolftail. "Amberthroat, Foxtuft!" He called, keeping his eyes on the infected dog. I peeked out from behind Wolftail's thick legs and watched it stagger towards us. The dog had poofy, matted, bloody light brown fur with a small dog. The dogs tail was oddly curled. It was just bigger than an average cat. Its eyes were a faded brown, its fur was matted and bloody, and there were several gashes on its body. Its jaw hung open, letting blood drip out of it as if it were normal.

"The smell of blood must have attracted him," Wolftail muttered through clenched teeth. I swallowed back a whimper. *That bird is ours!*

I felt like I was being watched as Wolftail jumped into the fight. Foxtuft and Amberthroat padded over with a mouse and tore over to assist Wolftail. I grabbed the dropped mouse and put it beside the robin. Shaking, I watched them claw at the "dead" dog.

They slashed at its nose, legs, and flank, confusing it. The dog spun around with his jaws chomping at their tails and paws. It was quick, but not quick enough for StreamClan's fast paws. Its growls and yips were high pitched and annoying. The three of them continued to claw at the infected dog but it still continued to growl and try to get them. The only ones beginning to grow tired and weak were our

patrol. From just watching, I grew tired myself. "Jump on him and break his neck!" I yowled, my fur standing on end. Wolftail didn't listen but Amberthroat did. She backed up and jumped onto the small dogs' shoulders. The dogs' face drove into the moistening ground, mud getting into its small black nose. Amberthroat grabbed its head in between her paws and twisted its head quickly and efficiently. A satisfying snap sounded through the air, but the dog continued to snap his jaws at us. It didn't yowl in pain nor move any other part of his body.

Everyone backed away from the stiff dog. "He can't move anything other than his mouth now. Good idea, Thornpaw," Wolftail bowed his head to me and fluffed out his pelt. "Bury him." He ordered, beginning to make a hole. "I remember this dog. It was my neighbors dog. He ran away a few days before this illness spread around," Foxtuft commented as she tossed him into the hole.

"Wow!" A meow came from the trees. I jumped in surprise and looked through the trees for someone. Everyone else heard it, too, but they didn't stop digging. "You Clan cats are some vicious and mean!" *Is that the Bengal she-cat Wolftail warned us about?* I wondered. An evenly patched she-cat with piercing green eyes hopped to the lowest branch of an oak tree. She was small like Whisperpaw and I as if she was seven moons old. Her tail flicked, showing the black rings. Under the black circles was a light brown coat.

Wolftail sighed and left the cats to finish the job. "Go away, Bengal. We don't need you around."

"What are those flowers for? Those are anemones. They are very pretty but nothing special." Bengal mewed, tilting her head to the side. Wolftail's ears went back. I kicked the flowers away. *Not what we're looking for...* I thought with a sigh. "We're looking for a cure. It's called zinnia-" Amberthroat began. Before she could finish her sentence, Bengal interrupted her with a loud gasp, hopping down from the tree, "Zinnia? How ironic! That's my name, Zinnia!" She landed right in front of Amberthroat, her muzzle in her face. Amberthroat was a small cat and so was Zinnia. Amberthroat backed away, her ears going flat to her head.

Wolftail narrowed his eyes as he thought about something. I gazed at the Bengal she-cat without blinking. "Tell us what you know about flowers and remedies!" Wolftail meowed suddenly, breaking the awkward silence. Zinnia seemed more than happy to begin explaining different remedies for injuries and illnesses. Wolftail interrupted her after a while of ranting. He didn't look satisfied.

"Okay, but do you know the cure for this illness spreading around?" Wolftail asked, taking an eager step forward. Zinnia shrugged, "I haven't been able to try what I know because I can never find the proper herbs for it. I know this remedy to make cats immune but I can't make the dead go normal again..." She blinked at us as we stared at her. Looking past our patrol, she began to zone out. Zinnia's jaws slipped apart as she went off into space. I purred at her.

Wolftail's jaw had almost hit the ground.

He nudged her from behind to make her walk. She jolted out of her trance. "You need to come with us," StreamClan's deputy muttered. He began to trot away quickly. Zinnia had a clueless look in her bright green eyes, but she bounced along anyway.

Foxtuft and Amberthroat lowered their heads beside Wolftail while I stood back with Zinnia. She tried to start up a conversation with me, but all I could do was listen to what Wolftail had said.

"She's from the prophecy! This is what the prophecy is about. She knows the cure, she knows how to make us immune. All along we tried to get rid of this annoying she-cat when we need her more than anything!"

***

Thanks for reading! Hope it was good for you guys. Make sure to comment what you think and have a good weekend! I will be on more because I'm going home for the weekend.

P_A83 out!

Chapter Twenty

Nightshade's POV

"Why have you brought her here?" Wildstar challenged with her tail and chin raised. Wolftail, Amberthroat, Foxtuft, and Thornpaw came back from patrol with a small Bengal she-cat. Her eyes were a brilliant green color, one that could be seen through the thickest mist. She seemed nothing more than a harmless kit.

Wolftail nudged the small she-cat forward. "Her name is Zinnia. She knows how to make us immune." He insisted, grabbing the attention from anyone around. Whitefeather bolted over and sized the she-cat up. He didn't say anything.

Zinnia gave the hostile leader an excited - yet clueless - look.

Is that the one from Whisperecho and Ivysplash's prophecy? I wondered. I confirmed it with a nod to myself as Wolftail explained to Wildstar that she knows the cure. "Isn't it ironic that she has the same uncommon name from the prophecy?" He pleaded. "Wildstar, the prophecy was about a *cat* not a flower!" Wildstar watched the small cat while he spoke. Thornpaw gazed blankly at the she-cat.

"Unless she can prove it within a quarter-moon, then she cannot stay here. She will be killed or thrown to the infected if she does not prove this," Wolftail dipped his head to his leader and nudged the small she-cat away softly. Zinnia didn't seem to care or notice Wildstar's comment.

Wolftail stopped and stood in the center of the clearing. Zinnia mimicked his movements without him noticing as he announced two more patrols to go out. "Crescentmoon, Whisperpaw, Ghostglow, go upstream to check the borders. Nightshade, Whitefeather, go downstream to check the borders and maybe the fence," He instructed.

Whitefeather's ear twitched and, without waiting, he headed off. *Oh sweet SoulClan,* I thought as I began to pad off. Reluctantly, I headed out beside Whitefeather. I wanted to learn more about the quiet and bubbly she-cat but I knew the patrols had to be done. I felt tense, uneasy, and timid as we traveled away silently. The wind blew behind us harshly, whipping our fur the wrong way. Whitefeather didn't talk to me nor look at me. *What do I say? He hates me... Will he hurt me if I defend myself? Did Ivysplash tell him something untrue while giving him the prophecy?* I wondered, rambling on in my head. It was hard to keep quiet for so long.

Ivysplash wouldn't lie like that. She would have defended me, I am sure. What do I say, what do I say?

As I thought about something to say, Whitefeather just kept to himself, in his own little world. The birds chirped and cooed in the tree tops, a squirrel chattered away in alarm as we padded by. The sky was dark, the sun was going down, and the air was chilly and unwelcoming. My fur stood on end as I prepared myself to bring up a conversation.

"So," I murmured. Whitefeather's muscles rippled on his back. I gulped but continued, "you know I tried everything I could to save Ivysplash, right?"

Whitefeather halted and so did I. I could feel his rage radiating from his body. He lashed his fluffy tail. I swallowed again and began to back away in fear. Whitefeather slowly glanced over his shoulder. His eyes were filled with hatred, anger, and pure pain. "Obviously not," He snapped, lunging for me.

I bolted to the side just in time and dashed out of our territory. *What am I doing? I barely know our territory, let alone* outside *of it!* I thought as I dashed through the darkening forest. I looked over my shoulder with wide eyes just as the huge white tom leaped for me with his claws extended and his jaws wide open.

Yowling in terror and distress, he landed on me and we plunged down the hill. *Why don't you love me like you used to?* I wanted to ask. As apprentices, Whitefeather and I had been great friends, but nothing stood in his way with his sister. The both of us had fallen in

love and promised to have beautiful kits... But as we grew up, he became cold... Colder than the hardest ice. With the death of his sister, he found just the right reason to hate me.

I tried to kick him off but he was too strong. I hissed at him and clawed back at him. In return, Whitefeather slashed at my throat and my eyes while I aimed for his muzzle. I kicked at his stomach until my hind legs went weak. As he smashed me harder in the face, I lost all my strength and let him hit me.

The world around me grew dark as blood from my neck and my face bled like a waterfall. My eyes were coated with blood so I blinked over and over, but it didn't get rid of it. My neck and face stung unbelievably bad. Whitefeather stopped just as I blacked out.

***

Blinking open my eyes, I realized it was now dark outside. It was cold and scary out. I could barely see anything. I didn't move because I was in so much pain in my neck, face, and lower back. I knew what he had done while I was asleep, but I pushed it to the back of my mind.

Something was dragging me by the scruff, but I didn't know what. Moaning, I tried to squirm out of its grip, but with so much blood loss, I passed out again.

***

I woke again to a lot of moaning and thumping. I glanced around. My vision was blurry and when I lifted my head, my eyes went to the back of my head. My head hit the muddy ground with a splash. I could feel the warm liquid from my neck ooze out from the deep wound again. I must have reopened it.

Gaining the strength, I turned my head to the left to see a white figure padding away. "Don't leave me..." I pleaded, realizing it was Whitefeather. I whined in pain and began to pant. I grew even more lightheaded when I tried to move. The sound of the thumping behind me becoming more desperate made me jolt slightly. The sounds seemed to be far off. I looked behind me towards the forest.

He was going to leave me by the fence for someone else to find.

Not thinking, I yowled to him, "Whitefeather! No, come back!" He wasn't even moving anymore. He was watching the fence sway violently over his shoulder. The banging made the fence creak and sway. The boards began to pull apart.

"Now look what you've done!" Whitefeather bellowed, running off into the night.

"No! Whitefeather, you can't leave me!" I screeched as the fence caved in. I tried to stand, but when I did, I fell back down. "Whitefeather..." I breathed, stumbling after him slowly.

My neck and face stung greatly, my head pounded, and I grew cold as if I had a fever. I looked behind me as something came over the fence with a loud groan. A pool of blood was laying where I once lay. *So much blood...*

More and more infected Twolegs, dogs, and cats hurried over to me. Their torn skin and gashes and their bulging white eyes frightened me. I wasn't even able to let out a scream.

As the blood dripped from my wounds, I fell to the ground again. My eyes rolled to the back of my head as the infected Twolegs, dogs, and cats tore at my small, innocent body. Whitefeather didn't come to my rescue like I had hoped.

"One day we'll have a litter of kits!" I squeaked. The moon hung in the sky as far as it would go. Stars twinkled above, reminding us that SoulClan was watching. We sat by the churning stream while everyone in StreamClan slept peacefully. Whitepaw glanced at me briefly with a small smile. His eyes glowed with excitement. He looked down and shuffled his paws. "When would that day come?" Whitepaw murmured, scooting over closer to me. Whitepaw had to look down at me because I was two moons younger than him.

I tilted my head toward him. "I don't know," I meowed. He gave me a small smile again. I could feel his awkwardness as he stared into my eyes.

"We'll name them Snowkit, Blizzardkit, or Thistlekit, right?" I asked when he didn't reply to my comment. "Something like that," Whitepaw purred, nuzzling my cheek. "If you or any of my kits are in danger, I promise on my sisters life that I will protect you with all the might I have." He vowed quietly. I blinked up at him hopefully.

As my memory and my life faded away, I realized that promise had been broken the moment his heart had.

Chapter Twenty-One

Lark's POV

I sat with Crowflight, chatting quietly, when I overheard Whitefeather telling Wildstar about something devastating. StreamClan all let out gasps and Wolftail hurried over, leaving Chippaw as he showed off his battle moves. Chippaw even seemed to be sad about the situation. Putting on my skull-protector, I leaped over the stream and trotted over to see what the commotion was all about.

"What's going on?" I muttered, flicking my ear.

"The fence caved in while Nightshade was hunting. Sh-she's dead..." Whitefeather answered, looking away with closed eyes. He didn't look convincing to me, but to everyone else he was innocent. I narrowed my eyes at him. When he looked back up, I realized he was really dull, lifeless, and cold about the situation. *You liar. You killed her, didn't you?* I wanted to confront him but I kept to myself.

This will be for another day. I vowed, glaring at the tom as he gazed up at me with fake innocence. "The infected Twolegs and dogs are coming. We have to hurry-" Whitefeather insisted, turning to run off. "Now wait just a moment," I growled, lashing my tail. "We should go back and save her. She could be just out of their reach."

"There's nothing we can do," He snapped, "We have to evacuate before they reach the camp!"

Everyone went quiet. The sound of their growls echoed from wherever they were to where we stood.

Wolftail's fur was on end, but he didn't say anything. He didn't look convinced either. RockClan had been eavesdropping from the looks as Silverfeather set up a patrol with her, Stormcloud, and Blossomfrost to go search for Nightshade. Wildstar turned to RockClan's territory and dipped her head to Marshstar, giving him a

thankful and fatigued look. He bowed his head in return.

Tigerstripe nuzzled Blossomfrost's cheek and murmured something to her. She nodded and replied to him quietly. Her pale green eyes were filled with fear and amusement as she headed off.

I leaped back over to RockClan's territory and hurried in behind the patrol. Without realizing it, I was at the head of the patrol as my adrenaline heightened. It was hard not to call out for Nightshade as we hurried to the fence. The sound of growling and moaning hit us in the face like a wall before we even seen them.

Stumbling Twolegs, dogs, and cats of all sorts came towards us. At the sight of us they picked up their pace. "Head back!" I demanded when I realized they were coming at us like a moving wall. "We can't get to her, go, go, go!"

We bolted together back to the camp without stopping.

Panting, I ordered everyone in partners so they weren't alone. "Everyone head upstream and be quiet." Marshstar announced, agreeing with my ideas. Wolftail stopped by the stream and croaked, "You didn't find her, did you?" I shook my head softly and gave him an apologetic look. He looked away and grabbed Chippaw.

"I can run myself, I can run myself!" He squealed, squirming out of his grip.

"Sorry," Wolftail breathed, letting Chippaw stand beside him.

Ripplecurrent's kits cried out as they were woken up. I pleaded silently for the kits to be quiet, but they didn't. The sound of the infected Twolegs' groaning sounded like they were closing in on us.

"Wait! I know a place we can go!" Zinnia yelled before anyone could go anywhere. Without anyone really thinking it through, Marshstar and Wildstar told their Clans to follow them as they followed the small Bengal she-cat.

Everyone had at least one partner as we went nether upstream nor downstream.

Quietly and efficiently, we headed away from the stream. *There goes our only water source,* I sighed. "It's a good hide out, I promise!" Zinnia purred, trotting away. For such a small she-cat, she walked quickly like an adult cat. She was the size of Amberthroat, maybe a bit smaller.

Wildstar, Marshstar, and I followed blindly behind Zinnia until she leaped into a bush and didn't come back. The bush reeked of herbs. Everyone began exchanging confused glances, so Marshstar took it upon himself to check out the bush.

Zinnia's head popped out of the bush just as Marshstar's face neared it. He leaped back. "Come on, before the ill herd comes!" And then she was gone again. Marshstar and I pulled the bush apart with our paws and revealed a hole in the ground. The smell of Zinnia came from it, confirming she had gone into it.

"Everyone in, hurry," I meowed, holding the bushes apart with Marshstar. Wildstar waited for everyone to enter before going in. Marshstar waited a moment before going in after her, and then glancing around the thick forest, I headed in, too.

It was hard to get myself through the cramped tunnel with the amount of muscle I had and with the skull-protector I wore. *This tunnel was for sure made for only one small she-cat...* Marshstar's tail was waving in my face. All I could smell was fear from the cats in front of me. Most likely, it was because it was dark, cramped, and unknown.

The dark tunnel ended as we entered a large room with few holes in the top for a bit of light. Vines grew from the top of the room. The smell of herbs was extreme. As I looked around, I noticed that there were large patches of flowers growing under the patches of sunlight. *Impressive.* The room was big enough to hold us all but not for long. Thought it was fine for maybe three days, the Clan cats would become claustrophobic since they were used to being out in the open.

I padded around the den. On the left side, near the end of the den, was a small hole. I ducked my head in under and sniffed. Zinnia hurried over and I shot my head up. "That's my sleeping den," She

mewed. I nodded and examined the herbs. Shadowflower and Smoketail seemed to have found it as well. They were muttering things with their heads low.

"Do you see anything new or are you just happy to have herbs?" I asked with a sarcastic edge to my tone.

They turned to me and Shadowflower answered first, flicking her tailto each bundle of herbs in the ground, "There is a lot of catmint, lavender, feverfew, snakeroot, and raspberry leaves, which is all for diseases, and then we have celandine, chervil, comfrey root, a bunch of goldenrod and marigold, horsetail, lamb's ear, juniper berries, rosemary, tormentil, poppies, tansy, and there is enough cobwebs around this place to soak up the blood in all of our bodies!" Smoketail nodded, "It's amazing."

I nodded in agreement. "Just to be safe, I grew them and saved them in here!" Zinnia purred.

Backing away, I decided to leave the two medicine cats so they could talk to Zinnia. I headed over to where Wildstar and Marshstar were talking. They bowed their heads to me and I did the same. Before I could say anything, all went eerily quiet. My fur stood up as the sound of the infected Twolegs, cats, and dogs passed by. They passed by with loud moans and groans. I unsheathed my claws, preparing for the worst. Eventually, though, the sound of them staggering by quieted.

Ripplecurrent's kits began to whine and cry. It took all my will-power not to tell them to shut up. "Ripplecurrent, I'm bored," Lionkit groaned, "I want to play out in the sun!"

"Shush you three!" Their mother snapped. Pebblekit slapped Lionkit's tail as it's tip twitched. Lionkit turned around and snarled at him, then turned back to complain to his mother who was laying down. Pebblekit hit her brothers tail again and then jumped back to try to get Lionkit worked up. "Quit it!" Lionkit squealed. Then the both of them began tumbling around with each other.

Ripplecurrent rolled her eyes and laid her head down to take a nap. Stormcloud sat beside her quietly, watching his kits play around

with amusement in his eyes.

"Can I play, too?" Hollowkit mewed, padding over groggily from Ripplecurrent's stomach. The small black-and-white tom was almost a moon younger than Lionkit and Pebblekit. The two siblings didn't seem too interested in the young tom because they didn't answer. "You can play with me, Hollowkit!" Dreampaw mewed, hurrying over. "I can teach you some battle moves, if you would like?"

Hollowkit nodded eagerly, his blue eyes lightening up.

"Lark?" Wildstar meowed. I looked back over to the two leaders when they said my name. "What do you think we should do?" I gave them a confused look and without even having to ask, they answered my question. "Should we stay only one night and then leave to find a new place or what?"

Taking off my skull-protector, I narrowed my eyes at my paws to think. Thinking about my decision in the long run, I thought about the problems, the solutions, and the best answer to their question.

Going back to the small stream: we could run into more infected Twolegs since the fence is down... Maybe we should prop something against it? But what? Thinking that decision through, I knew us cats - no matter how many of us - could never put up a new fence or even get the old, broken one back up.

Going through Twolegplace: we could for sure run into some flesh-cravers, but there would be more places to go through and jump onto. We would be out of good water or prey sources, though. This might be the best option... Since it's the only reasonable one I can think of.

I blinked away my thoughts and explained to Wildstar and Marshstar what I thought was the best plan: to go through Twolegplace with as many herbs as we could carry and as much prey as we could swallow. "If Zinnia can make us immune, then we will do that tonight." They nodded in agreement with their eyes narrowed in concentration.

Marshstar lowered his head. Wildstar and I did the same as he muttered, "So, what do we do with Zinnia?" I looked from Marshstar

to Wildstar to see what they thought.

"She may be annoying, but if she can make us immune, maybe she should stay with us. What if something happens to Shadowflower and Smoketail?" Wildstar flicked her ear as she finished her input.

I nodded, understanding her argument. "We should keep her around until she becomes a threat. She seems young right now, so if she grows out of her "clueless phase" then we might have to get rid of her," Marshstar dipped his head and then Wildstar did.

"What are you talking about?" Zinnia mewed, bouncing on her tiny paws. "It isn't any of your business. You're only young, so don't worry about it."

Zinnia tipped her head to the side when I mentioned she was only young. She narrowed her eyes and replied, "Young? I'm almost 14 moons old, silly!" I shot Wildstar and Marshstar a glare over my shoulder. They looked just as shocked as I was.

***

Sorry for slow updates, guys.

Hope you enjoyed, enjoy you're week!

P_A83 out!

Allegiances

RockClan:

Leader-

Marshstar; dark brown tom with dark green eyes.

Deputy-

Silverfeather; thin, silver she-cat with dark silver stripes, left blue eye and right green.

Medicine Cat-

Shadowflower; black pelt with white spots on her flank, small she-cat with very light blue eyes.

Warriors-

Crowflight; grey and black tabby tom, amber eyes.

Stormcloud; grey tom with blue eyes, Crowflight's brother, Ripplecurrent's mate.

Tigerstripe; brown tabby tom with black stripes, one black paw, blue eyes.

Blossomfrost; light fluffy brown fur with white ears and tail tip, pale green eyes. Apprentice- Dreampaw

Lark; black with grey markings and many scars, crystal blue eyes, tom.

Sparkdust; brown tabby she-cat with white front paws, amber eyes.

Fireflywing; white she-cat with pearl green eyes.

Mistnose; grey-and-white she-cat with dark blue eyes, Fireflywing's sister.

Foxtuft; dark ginger she-cat with a fluffy tail, white tail tip, yellow eyes.

Snowfern; grey with white patches and green eyes, she-cat.

Apprentices-

Dreampaw; pale grey she-cat with green eyes, Snowfern's daughter.

Queens-

Ripplecurrent; orange tabby with amber eyes, she-cat, **Lionkit**; fluffy orange tom with white paws, amber eyes, **Pebblekit**; grey with darker flecks, blue eyes, she-kit, **Hollowkit**; black-and-white tom with light blue eyes, Moonfur's only surviving son.

Elders-

Currently None-

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StreamClan:

Leader-

Wildstar; white calico she-cat with amber eyes.

Deputy-

Wolftail; large black and brown patched tom, hazel eyes, Chippaw's father. Apprentice- Thornpaw

Medicine Cat-

Smoketail; grey tabby tom with a blue tint, dark blue eyes and

barely noticeable scars.

Warriors-

Rowantail; semi-long dark ginger fur, she-cat with a plump tail and white tail tip.

Dawnflower; long light ginger fur, black spots around her blue eyes, she-cat, Rowantail's sister and Amberthroat's mother.

Ghostglow; white tom with glowing yellow eyes, Whitefeather's father.

Whitefeather; white tom, right yellow eye and left blue eye.

Crescentmoon; black with blue eyes, she-cat. Apprentice- Whisperpaw

Blackwind; jet black, light green eyes, she-cat, Thornpaw and Whisperpaw's mother. Apprentice- Chippaw

Amberthroat; small red-brown she-cat with darker stripes on her tail, amber eyes.

Apprentices-

Whisperpaw; silver tabby she-cat, amber eyes.

Thornpaw; black tom, white underbelly, green eyes, Whisperpaw's brother.

Chippaw; brown tom with black ears.

Queens-

Currently None-

Elders-

Currently None-

***

Cats Outside the Clans:

Jinx; black tortoiseshell she-cat with white-and-grey splotches and white paws, has cold green eyes, has a missing brother named Swipe. @LeAzzy

Leaf; pale brown tabby tom with darker patches, long fangs, dark green eyes. @ xXRainbowBlitzXx

Adder; mottled, dark brown she-cat with a white underbelly, dark green eyes, Leaf's sister.

Chapter Twenty-Two

Jinx -> @LeAzzy

***

Hollowkit's POV

I opened my eyes when the sound of cats stirring about made me jolt awake. Ripplecurrent was sitting up, Lionkit and Pebblekit were play fighting again, while everyone else was grabbing the sweet-smelling flowers out of the ground and mingling. Lark was talking quietly to Wildstar and Marshstar. "Ripplecurrent, what's going on?" I mewled, glancing up at my grey mother. Ripplecurrent blinked down at me and began to clean me up.

As much as I hated being cleaned, I let her so she would answer me. Between licks she murmured, "It isn't anything to worry about. We're just going on another journey," Lionkit and Pebblekit rushed over at the word "journey".

"Where are we going? Is it somewhere safe?" Lionkit asked, his head tilted.

"Can we eat soon?" Pebblekit slumped her shoulders.

I tried to get out of Ripplecurrent's grasp but she just held me in place with one big paw while she cleaned my thick fur. When her eyes lay on Lionkit and Pebblekit, she finally stopped. Their fur was sticking up because of the dust and small rocks stuck in their pelts. "I just cleaned your pelts! Quit playing around!" She scolded.

Silverfeather, Tigerstripe, Stormcloud, and Crowflight came into the den with prey in their jaws as my siblings sat down with a "humph".

"Yes, fresh-kill!" Dreampaw gasped. I watched the beautiful, silver she-cat hurry over to the patrol. Her ears flattened to her head in frustration when they pushed past her. They dropped the robin, the

starling, and the mouse for the lucky ones in RockClan to eat while Stormcloud handed the squirrel to Ripplecurrent. The both of them began to eat it together while I watched a StreamClan patrol come into the den. I watched as the they, Dawnflower, Blackwind, Wolftail, and Ghostglow, came back with a wagtail, two minnows, a vole, and a finch. The apprentices and few of our warriors ate with each other.

"I hate it how StreamClan is so close to us! It's gross!" Lionkit muttered to Pebblekit. They sat with their backs to me, facing the center of the den.

Pebblekit flicked our brother on the ear and glanced back at me. She turned back to Lionkit with her ears flat to her head. "Watch what you say about StreamClan, Lionkit! You know Hollowkit's mother is from StreamClan,"

I cocked my head to the side in confusion. *Ripplecurrent is from RockClan, so I must be a RockClan cat... Right?* I wondered.

Without thinking much of my sister's comment, I watched the two medicine cats give each other half of the flower portions that were provided.

Just as I began to doze off, I was suddenly picked up by someone. "Wh-what?" I began squirming around in the cats' grip out of confusion. "Stop moving so much, Hollowkit, we have to get moving." Stormcloud muttered through a mouthful of my fur. *Where are we going?* I wanted to ask, *Are the scary monsters coming back? Are we in danger? Is the den going to cave in?* I held in my thoughts and took a deep breath. Within heartbeats, I found myself fast asleep.

***

I woke up as I was set down. Drowsily, I blinked up at Stormcloud. *Are we safe now?*

Sadly, I noticed we were just at the fence we had stayed at before. It was broken; the dark wood was splintered where it had snapped and fallen. Blood was stained all over the wood. A pool of blood

was behind the group of cats. No one seemed to care that it was there. Nightshade was no where to be found and I wondered if that blood had been her blood.

Lionkit and Pebblekit were asleep beside Ripplecurrent's paws. "Okay," Lark began with Marshstar and Wildstar standing tall and proud beside him. Wildstar was small compared to the two tall toms, but she held her chin high. I purred to myself at how she was small compared to the other two beside her.

"We are going to search for a new home in Twolegplace," Lark informed us. I shivered as the wind blew harshly, whistling and whipping the branches around us. I nuzzled into Stormcloud's leg. He didn't even have to look at me as he lifted his long leg and pushed me into his stomach. Feeling safer and warmer, I listened attentively. "We will be going on the Thunderpath until we find a suitable forest or cave or anything for us to live in." All the warriors and apprentices of StreamClan and RockClan nodded.

"Are we going back to our original home when the air is clear?" Sparkdust asked as everyone stood up to leave.

The three leaders exchanged unsure glances. "Hopefully," was all Marshstar could manage to give as an answer. Sparkdust - nor any of the others waiting for an answer - seemed content with it, but they kept silent as we headed out.

The cats in StreamClan and RockClan stayed in behind their leaders. I tried to walk by myself but before I could hop anymore than three footsteps, I was lifted off the ground by Stormcloud once again. Lionkit was carried by Ripplecurrent and Pebblekit was carried by Crescentmoon. Crescentmoon always helped out kits. "Crescentmoon would be a good mother, wouldn't she, Stormcloud?" I meowed, "Too bad she didn't have her own kits. If only Twistedsoul was still here," Stormcloud hushed me as we began to leave.

"This time, we won't be separating. Everyone keep quiet and stay together." Wildstar murmured over her shoulder for everyone to hear. Lark didn't say anything so I took that as he agreed. Lark scared me. His skull-protector made me feel like he was evil, but he

was generally a nice tom, and I knew that.

Hopping over the broken fence, we stayed together as a group on the black and streaked Thunderpath. There were no infected Twolegs or dogs around, only their growls were faintly passed in the breeze.

I gazed around the Twolegplace. Though the sky was bright, it was gloomy, dark, and everything was yellowing as greenleaf was coming to an end. The transparent barriers in the walls of the Twolegnests were either broken or boarded up. One of them had bloody paw-prints from a Twoleg smeared on it.

I gasped as a dog growled from the left side of the group, StreamClan's side. Turning my head from the right side to the left side, I saw a huge, injured dog on a chain trying to get to us. Gulping, I forced myself to look away. The Twolegplace was such a dark place to be, but to everyone else, they hardly seemed to care. I guessed it was because we had been through just as much as the Twolegs and dogs had.

Sighing, I looked to the black ground. Everything was quiet in the Twolegplace; the only sound was the echo of our paw-steps.

We passed by a boarded up Twolegnest with a silver-mesh fence surrounding the perimeter. A figure sat on top of the roof. It was a small, dark figure. *Is it a cat? Go away! We don't need anymore mouths to feed!*

The figure hopped down from the roof, trotted to the fence, and leaped over it. It was a black tortoiseshell she-cat with cold, lifeless green eyes. I hissed at her, trying to intimidate her, even though I knew she wouldn't hear me.

"Sorry to bother you, but have you seen my brother, Swipe? He's black with dark grey flecks." The she-cat asked, halting our group.

The three leaders shook their head. The she-cat kept away from Lark, seeming to be intimidated and frightened by the muscular, scarred tom. The black she-cat looked at Marshstar for an answer. "Well can I stay with your group until I find him? There's nothing to

eat around here and I don't have anywhere's else to go." Wildstar instantly butted in as if she was the ruler of both Clans.

"No. We have too many mouths to feed."

"What if I hunt for myself?"

"No-"

Lark shot Wildstar a warning glare for her to shut her mouth. She rolled her eyes and stared straight. "As long as you can hunt and fight, you can stick around until you find your brother. If you never do find him, you and I will stick together because I am not with RockClan and StreamClan." The black she-cat swallowed but nodded, as if not sure if she should argue or not.

When the patrol set off again, the she-cat stuck to the right side of the group. Some of the warriors were hostile to be picking up another loner in need so I thought it was a good idea for her to keep her distance.

"I'm Jinx, who are you?" She glanced over at Marshstar. He bowed his head to her as we trotted along. "I am Marshstar, the leader of RockClan," Jinx nodded to him. "Hello, Marshstar."

Fireflywing lashed her tail from beside us. Her eyes were narrowed and her ears were flattened back. Fireflywing seemed annoyed, as well as her sister, Mistnose. I felt Stormcloud purr as he seen the action too.

We kept going silently after that; taking random turns until we came to a long, straight Thunderpath with no Twolegnests on either side. By then, the sun was beginning to drift down. "The sun went down a lot quicker than I thought it would," Foxtuft muttered to no one in particular.

"Yet another reason to find a new home before the first snow," Dawnflower sighed. Rowantail muttered something in return.

"What?" Her sister meowed.

"Nothing! I wasn't talking to *you*."

Well who were you talking to? I wanted to ask. I could hear the sarcastic tone as I pictured myself asking her that. I purred to myself.

The group was slowing down as we went up a hill. It was a short one. The Thunderpath broke off into an even thicker and longer one. On the left side of the Thunderpath we traveled on was a mirror image of our Thunderpath. On that side, it was almost completely empty. The only monsters on it were the few that had ran off into the ditch and tried to run on that one.

This time, the Thunderpath we stood on wasn't empty. It had monster upon monster on it.

On the opposite side, there were two Twolegs stumbling around. One was going the opposite way we were while the other was going the same way. Neither seemed to notice us as we stood there.

"What do we do now? We need to eat and rest," Wolftail asked, his ear twitching.

Stormcloud set me down. "We'll go slow. You can walk by yourself," He whispered. I nodded, excited to do something on my own for once. *My neck was getting sore anyway!*

Wildstar looked over at Lark and Marshstar. "Lets find a suitable ditch where no monsters are lying and then rest there." Marshstar concluded.

Slowly, the sore and tired group of Clan cats zig-zagged down the Thunderpath. We all avoided the monsters. I expected one to roar to life and come tearing down the Thunderpath towards us, but none did. They looked all too injured to move anyway.

Some had collided into each other while some were off into the ditch. Few of the monsters were even burnt and flipped over, their bellies exposed. The more ground we covered, the more monsters appeared on the Thunderpath. *They must have been fighting to get out of the Twolegplace!* I thought, gazing around with my fur on end.

I gasped as a Twoleg kit hit the transparent barrier with its naked

and pale paws. It had stringy, long, light brown fur on its head. A pink flower wrapped around it's forehead, keeping the fur out of its face. It growled at us and eyeballed us with bloodshot eyes.

The two front openings to the monster was wide open, but there were no signs of the kits' mother or father. StreamClan went on the left side of the monster while RockClan went on the right side. I ducked under the wing-looking opening.

Several other Twolegs - of all sizes and ages - were seen inside the monsters. As we neared the end, there were more on the outside than the inside of the monsters.

Suddenly the bunch of monsters came to an end. The Thunderpath still went on and on, but huge blocks of rock lay in our way in a straight line. The blocks were grey and thin but tall. They made a line across both Thunderpaths; I assumed it was a sign to not cross. StreamClan and RockClan ducked down as Twoleg after Twoleg - even a few dogs - stumbled around beyond the blocks. "Oh no," Jinx whispered, her tail trembling.

The blocks were no more than two-cats tall. Many, many black-and-white monsters with red and blue lights on top stood just outside of the blocks. I noticed some of the Twolegs that were stumbling around had black-and-white suits on.

"The Twolegs must have been trying to keep out the infection from the other Twolegplace," Wildstar murmured. A few of the cats nodded.

"Well, they did a terrible job." Ripplecurrent spat, twitching her orange ear.

Lark gestured with his tail for everyone to go to the right. Wildstar and Marshstar led us off of the hot Thunderpath and into a ditch. Lark took up the rear. I had to practically run to keep up with my father.

Wildstar took StreamClan to the left and settled while Marshstar took RockClan the opposite way. Exhausted, I fell asleep without even eating.

***

Thanks for reading! Hope you enjoyed, comment what you think, and keep your heads up!

P_A83 out!

Chapter Twenty-Three

Amberthroat's POV

The sun went down and the ground began to frost over as Ghostglow, Dawnflower, and I headed out of our temporary campground to hunt. Whitefeather had to stay back and guard - I assumed Wolftail didn't want him leaving his sight - while Wolftail, Crescentmoon, and Blackwind stayed behind to teach their apprentices new battle moves. Meanwhile, Shadowflower, Smoketail, and Zinnia prepared the herbs to make us "immune". Part of me didn't believe that it would really make us immune, but at this point I was desperate to be safe.

It was the second day in the ditch. Whenever night came, we slept in the trees with a guard from each Clan keeping an eye out. Rowantail hid in the trees day and night without moving a tail-length. Dawnflower and I tried several times to get her down, and at first she would just refuse, but now she completely ignored us. She seemed more content with the voices she heard than with her kin. The voices even seemed more interesting to her than prey.

I was sincerely concerned about her life.

Surprisingly, both days no infected freaks had disturbed us. Lark made us stay quiet, so that could be why they didn't bother us.

It was almost completely pitch black out as we silently headed through the cold forest. The forest was filled with thorn bushes, dying bracken, and layers of crisp leaves. I felt uneasy as we headed through the forest in search of prey.

Ghostglow stopped the patrol to check for prey. After he checked for any scents, he lowered his head again and gazed over at us. "I smell something. You two go search that way while I go this way," He instructed. Ghostglow gestured with his white tail for us to go right while he went left. We nodded and then Ghostglow headed off until we could no longer see him. Turning around, I noticed

Dawnflower was gone. My heartbeat sped up as I feared I had lost her.

"Are you coming?" She meowed, popping her head out from behind a tree. I nodded and dashed over to my elderly mother. Dawnflower looked like she was in pain every step she took. She was just about ready to go into the elders den, but I knew she would hold that opportunity off until the day one of her hips broke.

We paused at a birch tree. Both of us sniffed the crisp air and looked into each others' eyes. "Squirrel!" We chirped in sync. Purring, we followed the scent. Her purr was raspy but very heartfelt and sincere.

The trail of the squirrels scent led us to a fallen tree. The fallen tree was covered in yellowing moss and leaves from the trees around it. I put my paws on the log and looked over it. To the left was a fluffy grey squirrel. The grey creature nibbled on a patch of red berries. The berries looked like they, too, were dying along with the other plants around it.

"You can get it," I murmured. Dawnflower nodded and hopped up on the log. As quiet as a mouse, my mother stalked up behind the squirrel from on top of the fallen tree until she was right beside it. Wriggling her haunches, she leaped, but she had alarmed the squirrel already. Dawnflower just missed it. It ran up another tree and disappeared, squeaking in alarm and fear. The only way we knew it was still there was because it chattered up a storm at the top of the tree.

Sighing I hopped over the fallen tree and padded up to my mother. She stood gazing up the tree with an annoyed look on her face. "Oh well. This forest hasn't been stripped of the prey yet. There is still more to catch!" I reassured her.

"I guess so," was all Dawnflower replied with.

We ended up catching a mouse and a sparrow just before Ghostglow came back. In his jaws held a thrush. "We should bring this back and then search for a water source," He directed. We nodded and followed behind him.

***

Before we knew it, we were back at the fallen tree. This time we were searching for water instead of prey.

Without saying a word, I jumped over the fallen tree while the other two calmly lifted themselves over it as if they weren't sure if they could get themselves to jump. We kept our eyes open for a river, a stream, or even a puddle, but there was no sign of water.

"Why in SoulClan's name is there no water around here?" Dawnflower growled. I was just as confused as my mother was and it seemed like Ghostglow was as well.

Just as she asked, a croaky-moaning sound echoed from beyond the pitch black forest. Around us was a thick, grey mist. It swirled around our paws and the thin trees that made the forest so dense.

My heartbeat sped up as a figure began stumbling towards us. I lashed my tail in frustration. It was too cold to be fighting the freaks that roamed around the world.

I wasn't sure really what color that cat was, but it was had a bright coat. Its collar was light blue, ripped, and loosely hanging off of the cats' seemingly broken neck. Its head was kinked to the side and every groan it let out cracked. "Oh, poor thing," Dawnflower whispered, "It must have fallen."

I rolled my eyes. *It doesn't matter, the cat isn't in its conscious mind.* I thought, unsheathing my claws.

Ghostglow and I threw ourselves at it. Ghostglow smashed into it before I did. The infected cat was thrown down to the ground. Ghostglow began to smash the groaning cat in the face with hard blows. I hurried in, but soon I noticed I had nothing to help with.

As Ghostglow tore at the emotionless freak, I searched for something to jab into its head to actually kill it. A broken branch hung from the base of the branch on a tree loosely. I hurried over and jumped up to grab it in my jaws. Easily, it came off. It was a thin, but strong, branch that had smaller sticks branching out of the

middle and top. I snapped the smaller sticks off and called to Ghostglow, "Get off so I can kill it!"

He obeyed; leaping off of the creepy, white-and-grey patched cat, he backed away. The white-and-grey patched kittypet stood up slowly and headed towards Ghostglow and Dawnflower.

I bolted at the cat. As I ran, I twisted my head toward my right shoulder and then snapped it forward just in time to jab it into the kittypet's head. The cat went limp with the stick in its bloody head, dragging me down with it. I let go of the stick so the cat wouldn't bring me down to the ground.

"Let's keep moving," Ghostglow panted as he began wobbling away with Dawnflower on his side for support.

***

With no luck of water, we headed back to our temporary camp. The moon was at its highest point by then. The stars twinkled like ice shards in a sea of an endless black. The wind was cold, crisp, and dry, making my mind want water even more than it had the day we traveled there.

Ghostglow, Dawnflower, and I entered our small camp to find Zinnia preparing herbs with Smoketail and Shadowflower watching and learning eagerly. All the cats - from both Clans - surrounded them with eager tail flicks and impatient murmurs.

Lark padded up to us. He ducked his head down toward us so no one else would hear him. "Zinnia is finishing the herbs to make us immune. She said the ones who don't get the herbs will most likely die from the rancid air... Which worries me because there looks like there won't be enough for all of us,"

I saw my mother swallow as she glanced up at the young, tall tom. "So the younger warriors, apprentices, kits, and queens will get the herbs first?" She asked.

Lark looked at the group of cats and then back to us three. He nodded and trotted away.

I squeezed through the crowd of impatient cats and noticed how antsy everyone really was. Wolftail looked overwhelmed and tired. Ever since Nightshade was killed, he only spoke to announce things. He only had himself and Chippaw now.

"Could I have the apprentices, please?" Zinnia chirped in her cheery voice without looking away from her herb piles.

The four apprentices, Chippaw, Dreampaw, Thornpaw, and Whisperpaw, hopped into the circle and stood in a line in front of Zinnia. She pushed four doses of the immune-herbs in front of their paws. The four suddenly didn't look so bubbly; they were more worried about what it would do.

"Now, all you do is eat it and in two sunrises it will be in your system fully!" Zinnia purred as if it were no big deal.

The four cats glanced at each other, unsure of who would make the first move. Chippaw, of course, ducked his head down and ate the herbs in one mouthful. His eyes said he was disgusted but he hid it well with determination.

After that, Dreampaw, Whisperpaw, and Thornpaw followed Chippaw's actions. "What about my kits?" Ripplecurrent grumbled, flicking her bright orange ear.

"Kits can't eat the herbs, but *you* can! The herbs will go into your milk and be fed to your kits that way!" Ripplecurrent's ears went back as the Bengal cat pushed the next pile of herbs towards her.

Without arguing, Ripplecurrent ate the herbs and left the group to tend to her kits. She shook her head in disgust.

Zinnia didn't say anything as she nudged a pile to Shadowflower, Smoketail, Wolftail, Crowflight, and Blossomfrost. "Moon-cat, Tiger-cat? You too!" Zinnia meowed. Tigerstripe hurried over and devoured the herbs but no one came at the sound of "moon-cat".

"I think that's you, Crescentmoon," Smoketail purred. Crescentmoon hurried over and took the herbs, too.

Mistnose and Fireflywing pushed past Marshstar and Whitefeather.

Neither were too happy that Zinnia didn't call to them. "What about us? We're young! Please, Zinnia, give us the herbs! You're running low!" Mistnose begged and her and her sister hurried up the Bengal she-cat.

"You're running low?" Dawnflower gasped, shoving past me and Blossomfrost. "Amberthroat hasn't been given any yet! She is younger than those two kittypets!"

Zinnia's ears went back as she looked from my mother to the two kittypets. "Kittypets? Who are *you* calling a kittypet?" Fireflywing spat, her lip curling. Mistnose growled at my mother and she hissed in return.

Zinnia passed me a small dose of herbs and then kept the last in front of her. I hurried and ate the herbs out of fear that the two kittypets would come and eat them before I did. Swallowing the tangy herbs, I felt a sudden energy pulse through my veins.

Shaking out my fur, I began to focus more on what was going on around me again.

"This set of herbs will not go to you two kittypets," Zinnia decided. "You two seem too wrapped up in yourselves to care if the cats around you die or live. So in that case, I will just give this to Snow-cat!" Mistnose and Fireflywing let out whines. They were truly selfish, I realized.

Snowfern rushed up and took the herbs gladly. "Amber-cat, Snow-cat," Zinnia looked up at us, "That dose is awfully small. The bigger the bite from an infected dog, cat, or Twoleg, the more likely you two are to get the infection. The herbs can only do so much." We nodded as we understood what she had said.

"Okay everyone, go back to your sides." Lark meowed. Marshstar nodded and nudged his Clan back to his side, Wildstar doing the same.

***

Thanks guys for reading! Hope you enjoyed!

Have a good weekend!

P_A83 out!

Chapter Twenty-Four

Sootclaw's POV

Silently, I stalked toward the robin. It was pecking at a dying flower, unaware of my unsheathed claws and drooling mouth. Most of our prey went to catching the flesh-cravers, but this time this robin would be eaten by Whitefire and I. Lashing my tail, I leaped heroically onto the unsuspecting bird.

It flapped it's small wings under my grip and squawked in shock just as I lowered my head to give it the killing bite. Snapping it's neck, the robin went limp under my paws. It's leg gave a few last twitches. I only blinked, numb to the situation.

Whitefire and I were alone together. We stayed in a Twoleg's backyard. It was a perfect place to stay because it had silver-mesh fence around us and a small nest to stay in. The nest reeked like dog but there was never one around. The little nest sheltered us from the wind, the rain, and the hot sun. Plus, it had a very comfy purple cushion we could sleep on.

Spottedfire had convinced us - coughing and gagging - to not go back after going on patrol. She used the "we won't survive with that big of a group to feed..." sentence. It worked, obviously, and soon after we all regretted the decision. Turns out, Spottedfire's plan backfired on her. She died two days after our disappearance.

Sometimes I wished we had gone back. I wanted to know how my brother was doing and if he was even alive. Whitefire never talked about Snowfern or Dreamkit, so I refused to bring up my kin. Whitefire and I both were hesitant to Spottedfire's plead, so we could have gone back after her death but we had traveled so far from the willow tree that we couldn't find our way back. Everywhere we looked was continuous steaming rocks and the same glowing ball of fire in the sky.

When Spottedfire died, we left Spottedfire's body where she

dropped dead without burying her. Whitefire and I were so numb and lifeless from the rancid air and starvation that we didn't have a care in the world about what happened to her body. I had made a mental note that if I ever saw Wildflower again to not tell her we left her sister's dead body for the infected to chow down on.

Two moons ago we were silent and dying. Whitefire liked to stay in her own mind anyways, but I hated every moment of being quiet. I learned that no matter how much I picked at her to talk, that she would never open up. Now we at least talked about our plans or the flesh-cravers we had caught that day.

With the limp robin in my jaws, I padded quietly through the forest back to our nest. I followed the line of sticks Whitefire and I had jabbed into the ground so we could find our way back easily.

I glanced up at the white she-cat as she sat on top of a thick tree branch watching me come to the fence. "Any flesh-cravers or new cats?" I asked as I neared the silver-mesh. It was a question I asked every time I came back from hunting or checking the traps. She shook her head and kept her gaze forward.

I hopped over the silver-mesh fence and padded over to our nest. The scent of dog made the fur on my neck stand up even though I knew very well that the dog was gone and was never coming back. Sighing, I dropped the bird in the nest and went over to the tree Whitefire sat in. I climbed up the tree to sit next to her.

She sat with her head high and fur neat. Her stomach still looked sunken in but something was off about it. I looked out again to find a perfect view of the few traps we had made.

One trap was a hole about four-cats tall with a dead rabbit and a crow hanging from the branches above. There were five of them around our silver-mesh fence, all of them had at least four infected Twolegs in them. All five even had either a cat or two and a dog or two. From the one straight ahead, I seen three pairs of bloody, wounded arms swinging at the air, trying to get the rotting animals in their desperate grip.

Whitefire glanced over at me and twitched her ear. I looked over at

her and met eyes with her. Whitefire's eyes were lifeless and serious. Then and there I truly realized how different we had become ever since we left StreamClan.

She had little scars along her face, shoulders, and legs from running through thorns from the infected when we first decided to find another place to stay.

Finally, after many long moments of an awkward silence, Whitefire spoke.

"Sootclaw," Whitefire murmured, "I think I'm expecting your kits."

***

Hope you guys liked this short chapter of Sootclaw and Whitefire! It's supposed to only be short :3 I might do another chapter of them later on, but I'm not sure.

Have a good week! Keep your heads up 'cause summer is almost here!

P_A83 out!

Chapter Twenty-Five

Tigerstripe's POV

I blinked open my eyes to the sun cascading over my face. Squinting, I lifted my head. The sun was just drifting up the sky then and I seemed to be the only one awake other than Smoketail, Shadowflower, Wildstar, Marshstar, and Lark. Blossomfrost was still fast asleep, lying next to me with her flank rising and falling slowly.

The birds sung in the treetops while the frost began to thaw. My fur spiked up as a chilly breeze blew through the campground. I sat up and began thoroughly cleaning my fur.

"Morning," I heard someone meow. I looked around but no one was looking at me. The group of five cats were chatting quietly together, uninterested in me.

"Er, morning." I replied, narrowing my eyes at them. The five of them looked at me. Wildstar and Smoketail looked back at Lark, seemingly because I wasn't in their Clan. Marshstar bowed his head to me, "Hello."

I looked away, my ears flat to my head, and decided to ignore the first voice.

Standing up, I realized I didn't feel as tired and weak as usual. The herbs had definitely done something good to my body. I padded quietly out of the ditch, ducking under the thorn bushes, and out onto the Thunderpath. The groaning and growling was louder from there. The Twolegs and few dogs and cats were staggering around, either dragging their limbs or their whole body. Blood was stained all over the Thunderpath.

A sudden feminine screech - none like any cat screech I had ever heard - made me duck and unsheathe my claws. At first, I thought it was my imagination like always, but as the Twolegs began to go the opposite way of our camp, I realized it was real. I watched all of the

Twolegs, dogs, and cats shuffle away as fast as they could. Soon, the Thunderpath was empty. The only things that remained on it was the dead monsters.

"This is our chance!" Wildstar sneered. I looked over my shoulder at them and realized they too had heard the scream. "We can't stay here much longer, Lark. It's getting too hard to keep our voices low,"

Smoketail and Shadowflower nodded in agreement. "Not one of us even have real nests prepared." Smoketail commented. He glanced over at both Clans and shook his head.

I lashed my tail. *More walking? Oh sweet SoulClan, no,* I thought.

Maybe then you'll get stronger? Puny little thing, you are.

You just want to eat, don't you, you gluttonous beast?

No way, he wants Blossomfrost!

Yeah, to eat *her.*

My head began to pound uncontrollably. *Ugh... Shut up, shut up!*

I hurried off of the Thunderpath, shaking my head to clear my thoughts. "Tigerstripe, will you wake the Clan? Wildstar is going to begin waking StreamClan, too." Marshstar asked from where he sat with the group of cats. Lark watched me through his less-than attractive skull. I could smell it from where I was. I nodded and scrunched up my nose. "We're going to leave as soon as possible, so eat as soon as you can."

Padding over to Blossomfrost, I nudged her softly with my nose. She blinked open her eyes and moaned. *Wow, what a jerk Marshstar is!* One voice gasped. *More like Tigerstripe is the jerk. Did you see the way he just woke up Blossomfrost?* The other argued.

"Shut it!" I snapped. My voice echoed and everyone who was awake had turned to look at me. Blossomfrost looked at me with an unknowing look. Hot with embarrassment, I moved on. She had begun to accent the fact that when I snap, it isn't because of her, so

she didn't look too confused or upset.

After waking most of the cats up, I glanced up in the trees as a squirrel began to chatter loudly. I soon realized Rowantail was no where to be found. She usually slept in the trees every moment of the day. Ever since she begun to sleep in the trees without coming down, no one was allowed to go back up in fear that more cats would do the same.

"Amberthroat," I rasped, padding up to the small red-brown she-cat, "Rowantail is missing."

The small she-cat glanced around as Dawnflower padded up next to her. Her elderly mother looked too ill and tired to really care. "Of course! The day we plan to leave, she walks off," Dawnflower complained, trekking over to Wildstar to inform her. Amberthroat padded after her so I left them alone.

Wildstar began whispering the news to Lark. Amberthroat rushed off into the forest, calling for her kin, "Rowantail! Rowantail, where are you?"

Ghostglow rushed after her with Whitefeather watching through numb eyes. A growl rose up my throat. Unsheathing my claws, I began lashing my tail in rage. *That freak! Look at the way he looks at Amberthroat. She's too young to be around an insane tom like him.* I thought, knowing what would happen to her if she stayed around him. Wolftail seen it as well. He was thoroughly glaring at the white tom as Chippaw chirped to him about his dream he had last night.

Wolftail and I met eyes. Knowing we were thinking the same thing, we nodded once to each other.

"Amberthroat, are you insane? You can't be that loud out here!" Ghostglow scolded, nudging her back to the Clan. "But she's out there *alone*. She isn't in the right state of mind to be alone!" She whined. Usually Amberthroat would just glare at everyone and stay silent, so this was a surprise.

I noticed that every cat who had taken the herbs looked fuller and

more alive. *Those herbs really did work, huh?* But then I noticed the ones who didn't get any. They were all bony, sick, and looked as if they wouldn't make it much longer.

Zinnia bounced around Lark, saying he looked scary with the skull on his head and with how he "presented himself". He just watched silently without moving. Mistnose and Fireflywing glared at the small Bengal cat. I felt a purr rise up my throat. *Stupid kittypets.*

By the time everyone was awake, the sun was almost half way up the sky. There were few clouds, finally letting the sun come out to say hello. Though the bright sun was out and shining, the air was still crisp and cold.

"We will be traveling through the forest to find a suitable campground since something had alarmed the infected Twolegs," Marshstar announced. Lark nodded as well as Wildstar. Smoketail and Shadowflower began to round up the herbs they had left to prepare to leave.

Within only a few heartbeats, we all paired up and left the ditch.

***

Slowly and surely we headed through the frosty forest. Every leaf that remained on the trees were red and golden. By then it was close to the end of the day. The sky had gone from decent to bad. The sky was covered in dark, heavy clouds that threatened to either rain or snow. I hoped it would rain. The air made my nose hurt it was so dry, so I assume it wasn't rain that was coming.

Everyone in the Clans were getting anxious to eat and find a warm place to stay. "Where exactly are we going?" Jinx asked, peering over her shoulder to look at Lark. Instead, Foxtail answered.

"To find a new home, obviously." Jinx rolled her eyes and looked forward again. Mistnose and Fireflywing began to talk quietly to Foxtail. She didn't seem too interested in their whiny conversation, but she occasionally nodded anyway.

Blossomfrost was panting beside me. I wanted to help out, but I

couldn't put her on my back because I was just as weak as everyone else. We had walked an extremely far amount in just a day. We only stopped once to hunt.

She glanced over at me so I did the same. I gave her a sympathetic look and she did the same. "Oh cool! A field with a pretty tree!" Chippaw gasped, rushing forward. Wolftail hurried after his son and paused at a wooden fence that was rotten and broken. "That's a maple tree," Wolftail gazed at the tree with wide eyes.

"This is a good place to stay," Smoketail murmured to no one in particular. Silverfeather nodded, hopping over the fence. She wasn't as healthy as the ones who took the herbs, but she was looking decent. Silverfeather always took care of herself.

I hurried away, nudging Blossomfrost along with me, to the fence. The both of us gazed up at the maple tree. Blossomfrost watched the large, tall, bright red tree swing in the breeze through her warming, hopeful green eyes. In the field were several infected cats, dogs, and Twolegs. Most of them were cats. There were only two Twolegs, one dog, and about four cats.

A small Twoleg farm was way off to the left side of the field. I assumed the group of infected Twolegs and such came from the farm-nest.

Wolftail noticed the infected group and turned to the Clans. Wildstar and Marshstar hopped up onto the fence while Silverfeather hopped back over beside Wolftail.

"The cats with the immunity, come with me. We will be getting rid of these infected things so we can claim this territory!" Wolftail yowled. Crowflight, Crescentmoon, Wolftail, Amberthroat, and I stepped forward. The infected were alarmed.

"Yeah!" Amberthroat, Crowflight, Silverfeather, Marshstar, Wildstar, and I yelled in return. Though Silverfeather, Marshstar, and Wildstar hadn't of taken the herbs, they decided to fight anyway. Snowfern cowered behind Foxtail with Dreampaw behind her. Blossomfrost sat down and refused to move.

"I can't," She breathed.

I touched her cheek with my nose and reassured her. "They will understand."

Whitefeather, Ghostglow, Foxtail, Silverfeather, and the two Clan leaders joined the group of immune cats. "Attack!" Marshstar and Wildstar ordered, pounding away.

Adrenaline pulsed through my veins as we bolted through the field. Screaming, we alarmed the few infected Twolegs, cats, and one dog yet again. Ghostglow and Whitefeather threw themselves onto the one huge dog with matted fur, Silverfeather, Marshstar, and Wildstar attacked one of the four cats, Foxtail and Crescentmoon attacked another cat, Amberthroat and I tumbled into a black-and-grey cat, while Wolftail and Crowflight led the two Twolegs away, scratching at their feet and running just in front of them, teasing them. The last cat was slowly dragging itself toward Amberthroat and I, but neither of us paid any attention.

Slashing and spitting, we sliced the cats face and neck. Even with all of the blood coming out of the wounds, it didn't die nor weaken. Just as the other infected cat reached for Amberthroat, Wildstar smashed into it from it's side. The two of them tumbled through the long, frosty grass. Her calico head popped back up as she began to throw huge and deadly hits to the cats head.

I shoved the cat back with all the force I could muster. I didn't even realize that Amberthroat had left the battle. Before I knew it, a large, sharp stick was sent though the right side of it's head. It didn't go through completely, but it was enough to puncture it's brain and send it to the ground.

"Good work," I puffed. Amberthroat didn't reply because she was trying to get the stick out of the cats' head.

I nudged her away. With one paw on its head and my jaws wrapped around the stick, I managed to yank the stick out of the dead cats' head with a loud "slurp". A loud snap came from the cats neck and I found the head almost completely torn off of its body.

Amberthroat heaved up what she had been able to eat that day all over the cats' dead body.

***

Sorry for the long wait! Hope you enjoyed, have a good week! I won't be on as often as I could be after this week because school will be out so I apologize in advance for being inactive later on!

P_A83 out!

Chapter Twenty-Six

Hazelfur = @xScribex

***

Crowflight's POV

"Oh father, don't worry! Hazelfur and I are doing great now," Greypaw purred, hopping around his sparkling mother. I was in the old territory in a dream. Hazelfur looked happier than ever for once. I dipped my head to him as he stood beside his mother, still and suddenly serious.

"*The blood of the secret murderer in the new territories will fill the lake, and slither from their wounds as if it were a snake,*" They murmured in sync.

My ears flattened to my skull in confusion and shock. *Why can't they just visit me and* not *have to give me a confusing prophecy?* I wondered. "What does it mean?" I asked, taking a shaky step forward.

"We can't tell you silly! You'll have to find out yourself." Greypaw meowed as they began to fade away. Sighing, I realized my time with them was up. I blinked at my mate with sorrow and in return she bowed her head to me. Once they disappeared, I tried to swallow the ball of guilt and hurt that sat in the back of my throat.

***

As we all mingled around the new camp, I took in the view quietly. Stormcloud observed as well from beside his mate and kits. We were so alike; both of us were quiet and observant. His kits were almost the complete opposite, though.

I had decided to keep the prophecy quiet and not tell anyone. It wasn't like it was serious anyway, right?

StreamClan had taken refuge by the lake while RockClan stayed near the trees. The whole territory we had planned to claim was littered with large red cedars here and there, quite a few birches and pines, and even a willow tree was in the very center of StreamClan and RockClan's main border line. Marshstar and Wildstar took the willow tree as a sign and agreed to use it as the Gathering Place.

We all decided to keep the Clan name "RockClan" since our camp was on top of rocks. Near the shore line was a patch of rocks that stuck out of the ground. On the opposite side of the rocks, not facing the lake, was the medicine den. There was a large crack there, able to hold at least six cats. I watched as dirt was sent flying out of it, confirming that Shadowflower was still working hard to fix it up before night came.

The warrior and apprentice dens were on the edge of the rocks. The forest ended where the rocks began, meaning that the leaves and branches could block the sun and rain from them, keeping the nests dry. A huge oak tree was hovering over the warriors den, its trunk just touching the rocks.

Our campground was quite a ways away from the fence, but it wasn't too far from the lake.

No infected were around, luckily, as we settled down. We had all gotten rid of them before we decided where we would all live.

My ears went up straight as Silverfeather began to speak. Everyone's attention shot over to her as she began to announce the first patrol of the camp. "Marshstar will take Stormcloud, Sparkdust, and Fireflywing to make the border at the end of our territory and hunt if possible." Silverfeather then glanced at me, "Crowflight will lead Tigerstripe, Foxtuft, Blossomfrost, and Dreampaw to StreamClan's border," Silverfeather bowed her head to me and continued, "Crowflight, you are the oldest warrior, other than your brother, Stormcloud, so I trust you can create borders with your patrol without the help of Marshstar or I."

Bowing my head to her, Marshstar grabbed the three warriors and jumped off of the right side of the rocks. As I grabbed the three

others quickly and headed off of the rocks as Silverfeather announced that the rest would help build the camp.

As we began to head out, I overheard the small silver she-cat ask her mentor, "We aren't going back home anytime soon, are we?" Blossomfrost just sighed. Dreampaw's ear twitched as she waited for Blossomfrost to answer, but she never did.

It sucked that we would never see our original territory ever again, despite the fact at how dangerous it was now. I knew it would kill us to be there. Either we would be attacked or we would cough up our lungs.

As I lead Tigerstripe, Blossomfrost, Dreampaw, and Foxtuft through the new territory, I began to wish that Greypaw could see our beautiful new territory. Gazing around the bright, frosty, and red and golden forest, I felt a pang in my chest. The yearn for my dead son grew more and more.

The ground crunched with every step we took from all the crisp, dead leaves that layered on the ground. Blossomfrost hurried in beside me. "What's wrong, Crowflight?" I gave her a slight glance as I picked up the pace. "I just miss Greypaw and Hazelfur." I replied sorrowfully, watching the ground glide by.

"If I were you, I would be kind of happy my kits weren't stuck in this gory, messed up world. He is in a better place now. Hazelfur will take care of him now, you know that," She mewed, touching my shoulder with her nose.

I dipped my head to her, remembering the time when StreamClan confessed that they had killed my mate.

Hazelfur was always strong, provoking, and willing to fight. Just after Greypaw became an apprentice, rumors went around that StreamClan was stealing prey from our territory. Without thinking it through, she fought three StreamClan warriors and ended up falling from the Gathering Place and drowning.

An image of my cocky mate flashed through my head. Her pelt was grey with darker stripes along her back, white legs and ears, and

hazel eyes. Her hazel eyes glowed like the moon light and sparkles like the stars. She was never sweet to anyone but Greypaw and I. She had a sharp tongue and a lean, muscular body.

I noticed I didn't miss Darkshine one bit. She and I were never close. Even though Stormcloud didn't seem to care about her death, he had been close with her until the infection spread around.

Blinking my memories away, I glanced around to find we were at the border. Tigerstripe growled at the StreamClan patrol as they neared our new border. Dreampaw and Foxtuft helped me do the border while Whitefeather, Amberthroat, Blackwind, and Chippaw halted at the border. Whitefeather flicked his ear at the scrawny, dark tabby tom as he snarled at him. I wasn't sure why Tigerstripe was so hostile around him all of a sudden, but I *was* sure that it was for a good reason.

Whitefeather stared at him with lifeless, tired, and bloodshot eyes. "You killed her," Tigerstripe muttered.

"It isn't your business who or what killed Nightshade," He rasped, his voice seemingly unused in a while. "*You're* over there, not over here. Keep it that way." Whitefeather lashed his tail. I paused what I was doing and so did Foxtuft, Blossomfrost, and Dreampaw.

Tension floated around the two patrols. "Lets go, Whitefeather." Blackwind nudged him away but the tall, white tom stood his ground with his eyes like daggers.

I hurried over to Tigerstripe and stood in front of him with my eyes narrowed. "Stand down, Tigerstripe." His eyes met with mine. It took a lot not to flinch away.

"Move," Tigerstripe demanded, his eyes wide and serious. I wanted no part of his claws on my face, so I obeyed the warriors command. Before Blossomfrost could intervene with the situation, Whitefeather smirked at the tom as he backed away.

Tigerstripe let out a bloodcurdling yowl as he launched himself at the unsuspecting white tom. Blossomfrost gasped, taking Dreampaw in behind her, and began to back away.

Tigerstripe had landed on top of Whitefeather on StreamClan's side. Amberthroat just glared at the white tom with her fur on end as he got the dirt beaten out of him. Whitefeather tried to fight back but Tigerstripe's adrenaline was too powerful. As Whitefeather was being beaten, he began choking up blood and gasping for air. Blood splattered the frozen ground and the bushes around the two toms. Tigerstripe slashed at his muzzle, neck, and eyes until Whitefeather went completely still.

Even after that, Tigerstripe kept hitting him. No one moved a muscle, afraid to intervene. Something suddenly bursted from the bushes in behind us, so RockClan's patrol whipped around. I expected an infected cat or dog, but it was Lark and Jinx. Lark held a sparrow in his jaws, confirming the two of them had been hunting.

Lark dropped his prey and pried Tigerstripe off of him. Whitefeather's dark red blood poured from his face and neck, dripping onto the ground and staining the crisp leaves and dead bushes that marked the end of StreamClan's territory. A small trickle of blood stained the side of his jaw. *The blood of the secret murderer in the new territories will fill the lake, and slither from their wounds as if it were a snake,* The prophecy rung in my ears. My heart practically stopped beating then and there as I realized Whitefeather's death was what the prophecy was warning me of.

He deserved it, A familiar voice muttered in my ear. My fur spiked up along my spine as I realized it was Hazelfur.

Whitefeather's blood formed a red puddle as he lay there. Both eyes were no longer yellow nor blue, but a clouded over mask of what they used to be. I swallowed as Tigerstripe was shoved over to our side again.

Blackwind and Chippaw had their jaws to the floor with shock.
***
Sorry for the long wait... I have been deathly busy. Hope you enjoyed!
P_A83 out!

Chapter Twenty-Seven

[image]

Above is part of StreamClan's territory!

***

Blackwind's POV

"You killed him? Tigerstripe what is *wrong* with you?" Blossomfrost gasped, shooting the stained tom a glare. Lark stood in between the two. I didn't think Tigerstripe even heard the fluffy tabby she-cat as she hissed at him. "You can't just fight random cats just because we settled down!" Tigerstripe met eyes with her. His eyes were wide, his ears were straight up, and his fur was prickled up along his spine in distress.

StreamClan always thought of him as an insane, scrawny tom who had no point in being a Clan cat. But Whitefeather was a different story. He wasn't too different though, because he was just as insane and scrawny as Tigerstripe. Whitefeather was just a freak of nature to me. We could tell how much Wolftail despised the white tom after Nightshade's death.

Lark backed Blossomfrost up but she kept peeking her head over his shoulders to see Tigerstripe. Her eyes were narrowed to a slit and her ears were flat to her skull. She continued to go at him even though we doubted he was listening. "Is this how you want to be seen as? Some insane, careless tom who murders anyone because *why* in great StarClan not?"

His eyes faded from lifeless to shock and embarrassment. He looked to his paws and refused to look at Blossomfrost. Tigerstripe's eyes remained as wide as an owls.

"You fool!" Blossomfrost spat, fury wavering from her spiked up pelt. The young she-cat refused to quit, making her way around Lark. Jinx looked unsure of what to do as she sat back and watched.

Dreampaw, Foxtuft, and Crowflight also sat back in watched.

Crowflight's muzzle was dotted with white specks and his body was sunken in, releasing how old he was becoming. *I bet his brother isn't any better looking.* I thought as Blossomfrost shoved her muzzle into Tigerstripe's. Small snowdrops began feathering its way down to the ground and onto our pelts.

"Do you want our kits to think their father is a murderer? Don't you get it? They will be terrified of you. *Terrified,* Tigerstripe," Blossomfrost shook her head, her eyes showing how exhausted she was. Everyone's eyes widened with surprise when she came out with the fact that she was expecting his kits. Even Chippaw, who was watching Whitefeather's stiff body, waiting for it to come alive again, looked up.

You could tell Blossomfrost regretted saying that because she instantly backed away. Tigerstripe glanced up and opened his mouth to speak, but before he could let it sink in or ask anything, the sound of moans echoing from RockClan's territory made us look away. "You're all on your own!" Amberthroat snarled, bolting away to StreamClan's campground.

Lark grabbed the prey and buried it as an infected Twoleg kit and dog came stumbling towards the RockClan patrol. Foxtuft and Tigerstripe ran in instantly to fight the dog while Lark and Crowflight began to lead the Twoleg kit away, clawing at its ankles.

Dreampaw's small body didn't cover much, but she stood in front of Blossomfrost anyway and protected the pregnant she-cat. Behind Dreampaw's fiery eyes was pure fright. She hid it behind her curled lip and fluffed up tail well, I noticed.

Jinx just sat back and watched. Other than her tail tip, she didn't move a muscle.

Chippaw's frightened and shocked gaze flooded with sudden frustration and anger. "I hope you die, Tigerstripe!" He snarled as he bolted away. "Chippaw, come back here!" I called, surprised at how rude he had acted. *I guess he really is Wolftail's kit, huh? Loyal to his Clan and very demanding,* I thought, rushing after the young

apprentice. Without even realizing it, we left Whitefeather's body to come back alive for someone else to deal with.

As I bolted away, the snow began to form a sheet of white on the ground. My fur was coated with the white powder, and my paws were painfully numb as I came to our camp. Chippaw and Amberthroat were already there, talking to Wildstar and Wolftail.

Our camp was right by the lake with plenty of spruce trees, oak trees, pine trees, a few maple and birch trees here and there, and so forth. Each tree now had lines of snow on their branches and bare patches under them.

The trees covering the open sky would take some getting used to, but I was okay with our new home.

Where the grass ended, the lake began. There was a boulder sticking out of the ground where we decided we would call the Clan meetings. A fallen tree ended the camp, laying on the left side of it with moss layering the side most exposed. The camp looked to be under good construction.

The nursery had been dug out under the fallen tree, the medicine den was under an oak trees' roots, the warriors and apprentices den were beside each other at the edge of the camp on the right side. The only thing that separated the dens was a bare branch that had fallen before we had came to the territory. It had many other smaller branches sticking out of all sides, offering some shade.

"Blackwind? Are you there?" Thornpaw purred, Whisperpaw beside him. I blinked away my thoughts and nodded, giving them a loving glance. My two small - yet strong - apprentices looked proud and exhausted from the amount of walking we had done in the few moons they had been an apprentice. "Blackwind, after the crazy Twolegs and dogs are gone, can we go home?" Whisperpaw asked, tilting her head to the side.

Sighing, I shook my head, deciding to tell them the brutal truth. "I don't think we will ever see our old home again. This nightmare may never end, and even if it does, it is highly unlikely that we would remember our way home," Their eyes that were once filled

with excitement and hope faded to fatigue and sadness. "We will have to keep the memories with us instead. I'm sorry,"

Thornpaw rolled his eyes. "Sure you are," He snapped, stalking to his new den that had just been made. Whisperpaw kept her head down as she followed in behind her brother.

"They will understand in time, Blackwind." Wolftail reassured me, stroking my back with his tail tip. I sighed again and nodded. "I sure hope so,"

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Sorry for the long wait. I don't get much time on here as I would like. Hope you enjoyed! Make sure to check out RAIWCF #2!

P_A83

Chapter Twenty-Eight

Foxtuft's POV

As Blossomfrost paced anxiously around the new campground, I watched intensely. Tigerstripe lay in front of Shadowflower and Zinnia. His leg was badly bleeding from the infected dog that had attacked our patrol. It had bitten straight to the bone, staining the new layer of snow on the rocks we stood on with crimson drops around his paw prints. Tigerstripe clenched his jaw to keep the pain to a minimum while his tail lashed back and forth.

"He will be alright. He just needs to rest lots after we wrap him up," Zinnia reassured Blossomfrost cheerily, though I wasn't sure that she was paying much attention to the small cat. Lark lashed his tail from side to side, his skull-protector covering his face. He didn't seem too happy to be around the tense situation.

Marshstar stood at the edge of the camp and called his Clan forward for a small gathering. I hurried over to Blossomfrost when she didn't leave her little trail of paw-steps. But when I tried to get her to go to the gathering, she shrugged me away and continued to pace. "Don't bother, Foxtuft," Ripplecurrent scoffed, rolling her eyes as her kits bounced around her paws, not realizing what was going on.

I bowed my head and trotted over to the gathering. "Blossomfrost is moving into the nursery so Dreampaw will be mentored by Crowflight from now on," Our leader rasped, glancing at the elderly black tom. "It will give you something to focus on other than your own guilt and sorrow."

Blossomfrost didn't look impressed but she tried not to show it. Her ear twitched, pacing through her trail of jumbled up paw prints as the sun slid down the sky. The snow continued to fall peacefully as the gathering ended. "Silverfeather, Shadowflower, we need to speak," Marshstar gestured with his tail for the two she-cats to go to his den. They hurried forward, leaving Tigerstripe to be dealt with by Zinnia.

Zinnia began to finish covering the wound cheerfully. Nothing fazed the young she-cat. It was as if she were in a world full of rainbows, sunshine, and butterflies. With every tap she made, she hummed a little tune, bobbing her head along. Tigerstripe's lip curled in annoyance, anger flooding his gaze as the she-cat continued.

I watched Fireflywing and Mistnose whisper to each other from in behind the departing crowd of cats, their eyes rolling and shoulders hunched. Flicking my ear, I glared over at them. "Why don't you rest instead of pace?" Stormcloud suggested, gesturing with his tail to the newly made nursery that was beside the medicine den. She let out a small sigh of defeat, padding away. Stormcloud nodded once, then padded back to his stressed mate.

Sitting back and watching was all I decided to do. Marshstar, Silverfeather, and Shadowflower were occupied with a meeting so there wouldn't be any patrols going out. I padded over to the newly made dens, making small paw prints as I headed off. Laying down, I rested my chin on my paws and took a quiet nap under the tree.
***
"Foxtuft, we have to go make traps," a small meow ended my dreams of playing with my Twolegs, jolting me awake.

I blinked open my eyes to the sight of Dreampaw and Crowflight. Crowflight looked a bit more lively with a bouncing apprentice around him. Dreampaw gazed down at me with excitement. The sun was drifting back up the sky, a swarm of dark, bulgy clouds filling the entire atmosphere.

Groaning, I sat up and nodded to the young, silver she-cat. "Hurry, let's go!" She purred. I arched my back in a long, refreshing stretch, a few loud snaps popping in the crisp air. Ever since the fence had fallen on my lower back, I found it hard to run, kick, and use my tail. Every paw-step I took was a bit sore. I hopped off of the rocky campground, cringing from the high jump. I could feel Snowfern's eyes watching us leave. She was incredibly overprotective over her daughter.

I followed in behind Crowflight, Dreampaw, Mistnose, and Silverfeather, trotting through the thick and wet snow. "They said we have to create barriers around our *entire* territory and then kill

anything in it! Or was it the other way around?" Dreampaw narrowed her eyes at the ground in thought. I let out a *mrrow* of amusement.

Crowflight shook his head, his eyes filled with humor. Mistnose looked annoyed and cold already while Silverfeather was just serious and quiet. We continued on silently, heading the opposite way of StreamClan's territory. My stomach twisted around as my empty belly began to realize how much I hadn't eaten in the past few days. Shaking my head, I ignored the feeling and kept on going. The wet, sparkling snow was up to mid-leg, making it hard for Dreampaw to keep up. Despite the amount of snow, she seemed to like the challenge.

My paws were practically frozen and raw when we came to the border. *It's going to be a long day.* I thought, sighing as the five of us departed. "Find any logs, sticks, or branches and begin to pile them here," Silverfeather demanded, drawing a small line in the snow to mark where she meant.

Mistnose and I departed from the group, heading to the left to search for any logs or big branches. Anything that would make noises or stop the infected for even a heartbeat from coming in was what I was looking for, really. Flicking my ear, I made sure I had space from Mistnose as I hurried along. The air was chilly and my paws were almost numb as I hurried over to a large log.

"I found a log, Silverfeather!" I called over to the others. Crowflight and Dreampaw were dragging a big branch toward the line our deputy had made as Silverfeather came to help us.

There wasn't that much snow so I was sure it wouldn't be that hard with three strong cats to push the log to the line. *It isn't that far, we're good.* I reassured myself as I put my paws on the back of the wet log. Mistnose threw her pride and selfishness away to help me push it, which actually surprised me. Silverfeather put her paws up on the opposite side that Mistnose was on, and began to push with all her might. Mistnose and I followed her moves with a groan.

Clenching my teeth and squeezing my eyes shut, we dug our claws into the mucky ground until we made progress. I then shoved it

with all my might. To my relief the log did a full turn, but sadly all three of us fell flat onto our faces into the dip of cold undergrowth that the log had sat in for moons upon moons. I lifted my head right away and brushed the dirt out of my face. Mistnose groaned from the dirt in her pelt but after we glanced around at the three of us, we all began to purr. Even Crowflight was into it.

"Do you need any help?" He purred with Dreampaw at his side.

The three of us nodded. "That would be lovely," Silverfeather shook out her pelt as she replied to the elderly warrior.
***
We entered the camp in a good mood, purring about the log situation. It had taken a while for us to get it to the line and to find other branches and logs to put up a border, but we did it just fine. The sky was still dark, threatening to spill it's snow, but it didn't faze us. Not even the crisp and dry air made the five of us angry. Crowflight was carrying a squirrel that he had caught while Mistnose carried a starling. She held her muzzle high with pride as she hopped up onto he rock. Fireflywing was coughing up a storm in the corner, little blood splatters around her, and Stormcloud was coughing up blood with Ripplecurrent at his side. For once Ripplecurrent was trying to sympathize her mate instead of sit there with a sour face.

"I'm going to go discuss the new guards with Marshstar. We will need four; two for the border we worked on and two for the field. They will work all night and sleep most of the day. That's all they will be asked of," Silverfeather bowed her head to us with joy and humor in her bright gaze before she padded off to Marshstar's den. Crowflight and Mistnose put their prey away. After she had out the prey in the pile, Mistnose hurried over to her sisters' side to comfort her.

Dreampaw hopped over to her stressed mother, Snowfern. "Snowfern, I had a great time!" Dreampaw gasped, pouncing around. Though Snowfern didn't look too impressed by her kits' filthy pelt, she looked relieved that her kit was okay and happy.

Silverfeather suddenly burst out of the leaders' den, her fur on end and her once brilliant eyes gone to terror. Everyone froze and stared

at her. Shadowflower popped her head up from the medicine den with confusion in her eyes. "What's wrong?" She meowed, her voice echoing awkwardly throughout the camp. "Marshstar... i-is dead," Our deputy whispered.

All the joy in RockClan instantly switched to panic, shock, and distress. "Marshstar was getting ill, I noticed. He was coughing up blood like a few of the others, too... I sent him to sleep because he was complaining of stomach pains and being tired when the patrols went out," Shadowflower murmured with Zinnia nodding beside her to confirm her answer. Shadowflower was horrified as she trotted into the den our leader lay in. Zinnia wasn't any longer happy, either.

Silverfeather stood there in disbelief, unable to wrap her thoughts around the fact she was now leader of RockClan. "Where do we go to speak to SoulClan? How will you get your nine lives, Silverfeather?" Dreampaw murmured, gazing up at the stressed out deputy. "I guess I will have to see Wildstar for her opinion," She replied without looking the apprentice in the eye.

"RockClan, tonight I will see Wildstar to discuss a new Gathering Place and how I will get my nine lives," Silverfeather announced, swallowing her anxiety down to be a good role model. Stormcloud and Fireflywing coughed up a storm of blood while Silverfeather spoke, but everyone understood it wasn't their fault. It was a terrible cough that took their breath away to get rid of the phlegm. "I will be back by sunset at the latest. For now, Foxtuft and Sparkdust will guard the borders. Tigerstripe will be a night guard once he heals and Sparkdust will be a day guard after tonight." She finished, bowing her head as she padded away.

Sighing, I pushed my hunger to the back of my mind and followed my direction. I headed out to the border to guard the night bravely. I knew it wouldn't be long before Fireflywing and Stormcloud would pass away, so I kind of liked the idea that I was a guard.
***
Again, I apologize for the slow updates. When Shit Went Down's next chapter is coming out soon, too!
P_A83 out!

Chapter Twenty-Nine

Wildstar's POV

With the sun making its way down slowly and surely, I headed back to our new camp with a sparrow in my jaws. Crescentmoon and Whisperpaw both had fish while Amberthroat hadn't managed to catch anything. Not to mention she looked a bit bigger than she had a quarter-moon ago. It was unusual for the young she-cat because usually she would get anything and everything she aimed for. This time she missed a minnow *and* a robin. None of us thought anything of it, though.

Wolftail dipped his head to us as we entered the dimly lit camp. He sat beside Blackwind, purring and enjoying his time, by the medicine den. Whisperpaw hurried over to her brother, Thornpaw, to show off her catch. Chippaw and Thornpaw were wrestling by the nursery, wet snow spraying everywhere as they tumbled around. "Hey! Hey, look what I caught!" Whisperpaw gasped. "Whisperpaw, put it in the fresh-kill pile before it's no longer good to eat." Blackwind scolded from the fallen tree. Whisperpaw groaned in annoyance but obeyed her mothers' order.

Purring softly, I headed in behind the young she-cat as she stalked away with Crescentmoon at my side to deposit my prey. When I got there, there was only a mouse and three fish to do the whole Clan. Shaking my head, I decided to let the others eat instead of feeding myself. Just as I turned to go to my den, the last patrol of the day came back in. Ghostglow and Dawnflower came in with another cat in behind them. *Please don't be another rogue...* I begged, watching them enter. We already had Lark and Jinx roaming the two territories, we didn't need any others. But as I narrowed my eyes to get a better look, I realized it was only Silverfeather.

"We were coming back when we met Silverfeather heading this way. She says she needs to speak with you alone," Dawnflower rasped, her eyes pale and lifeless. She sniffled as she stumbled to her nest, leaving her sentence at that. Her shoulders were hunched,

and her tail dragged in behind her. Ghostglow bowed his head to the deputy of RockClan and headed to the fresh-kill pile.

I gave Dawnflower a side glance. "Smoketail, Dawnflower needs your assistance," I looked to the fallen tree to watch for the young tom to come out. He hurried out at the sound of his name and nodded. "Wolftail, make sure she eats. I will be back before midnight." He nodded and watched me head out.

Silverfeather trotted through the snow with me at her side quietly. She seemed tense and anxious, but I wasn't sure why. "What is it you need?" I finally asked once we were out of anyone's earshot.

She sighed. "Marshstar has died. I need your input. Who will be our deputy? Who will guard the borders? How will I get my nine lives?" I swallowed. *Marshstar died? Didn't he have four lives or so left?* I wondered, dumbfounded.

"I'm sorry to hear that your leader passed away," I answered calmly, "You have many reliable warriors. Stormcloud or Crowflight would be who I would chose, but that is only me. Whoever you think, is who it'll be." Silverfeather nodded in understanding. "Now what about this guard thing you had said?"

Silverfeather looked forward and then to me. "I assigned some warriors to be a new guard so we can make sure we know if any infected are coming, but with so little warriors, how will we patrol and keep the Clan fed? I think two for the night and one for the day would do it, though." I nodded. "Interesting. What a good idea," I agreed, narrowing my eyes in thought. *So good, I just might steal it for myself.*

We kept heading away from StreamClan's camp without realizing. My pelt stood on end as a cool breeze blew through the field. "I also noticed we haven't found a place to speak with SoulClan," Silverfeather added. I nodded, realizing that without a way to speak to SoulClan, neither of us could get our nine lives.

"I'm not sure. As we walk, we might find a place, but other than that I don't know myself. Without a place to speak to them, you nor I will get our nine lives," I told her. "Until then, I suggest you

change your name to Silverstar and pretend you got your lives. That's what I had to do." She nodded but didn't reply.

As we continued silently through the snowy field, we slowly came to a large, steep hill. On the very top was a beautiful maple tree; it's branches once scattered with bright red leaves now had a topping with white, sparkling snow. Underneath the tree, about a half-a-tail-length down the hill, was a large boulder jabbing out.

"Perfect." Was all Silverfeather muttered. She hurried toward the hill and bounded up it, snow spraying behind her as she clawed her way up.

Silverfeather hopped onto the boulder and put one leg on the edge with her chin raised. Proudly, she announced, "I will be known to you all as Silverstar from now until I die!" as if there were both Clans watching with awe.

I shook my head with annoyance and began padding toward my camp again. *Psychotic. I'm glad I'm not in RockClan...*

I heard Silverstar hurry down the hill and in beside me. As we began trekking out of the white field, I decide to ask her, "Since we didn't find a place to speak with SoulClan, you should keep looking in your territory?" I glazed over at the silver she-cat, but she didn't seem to have heard me. Sighing, I let it go and decide not to ask again.

Keeping my gaze forward, we quietly made our way back through our new territory until we came to RockClan's border. By the time we halted at her border, the moon was almost at it's highest point. She finally replied to my question. I was shocked because I had forgotten what I had even asked.

The silver leader looked over her shoulder at me, her eyes flashing with something deadly; I couldn't grasp the reason why she had looked at me so menacingly. "You know what? I'm done with SoulClan." Silverstar looked away and began walking into RockClan's territory again.

Without looking at me, she snickered, "You can look for them all

you want, but RockClan is no longer going to be in touch with SoulClan,"

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Sorry... Wattpad screwed up and took out like half of this chapter. Enjoy though! Chapter 30 is the last of Bloodshed... So prepare for book 2!
P_A83 out!

Allegiances

RockClan:

Leader-

Silverstar; thin, silver she-cat with dark silver stripes, left blue eye and right green.

Deputy-

Crowflight; grey and black tabby tom, amber eyes. Apprentice- Dreampaw

Guards-

Tigerstripe; (description below - night guard)

Foxtuft; (description below - night guard)

Sparkdust; (description below - day guard)

Medicine Cat-

Shadowflower; black pelt with white spots on her flank, small she-cat with very light blue eyes.

Warriors-

Stormcloud; grey tom with blue eyes, Crowflight's brother, Ripplecurrent's mate.

Tigerstripe; brown tabby tom with black stripes, one black paw, blue eyes.

Lark; black with grey markings and many scars, crystal blue eyes, tom.

Sparkdust; brown tabby she-cat with white front paws, amber eyes.

Fireflywing; white she-cat with pearl green eyes.

Mistnose; grey-and-white she-cat with dark blue eyes, Fireflywing's sister.

Foxtuft; dark ginger she-cat with a fluffy tail, white tail tip, yellow eyes.

Snowfern; grey with white patches and green eyes, she-cat.

Jinx; black tortoiseshell she-cat with white-and-grey splotches and white paws, has cold green eyes, has a missing brother named Swipe. Isn't fully in either Clan, is just hanging around both Clans.

Apprentices-

Dreampaw; pale grey she-cat with green eyes, Snowfern's daughter.

Queens-

Ripplecurrent; orange tabby with amber eyes, she-cat, **Lionkit**; fluffy orange tom with white paws, amber eyes, **Pebblekit**; grey with darker flecks, blue eyes, she-kit, **Hollowkit**; black-and-white tom with light blue eyes, Moonfur's only surviving son.

Blossomfrost; light fluffy brown fur with white ears and tail tip, pale green eyes. Expecting.

Elders-

Currently None-

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StreamClan:

Leader-

Wildstar; white calico she-cat with amber eyes.

Deputy-

Wolftail; large black and brown patched tom, hazel eyes, Chippaw's

father. Apprentice- Thornpaw

Guards-

Ghostglow; (description below - night guard)

Crescentmoon; (description below - night guard)

Dawnflower; (description below - day guard)

Medicine Cat-

Smoketail; grey tabby tom with a blue tint, dark blue eyes and barely noticeable scars.

Warriors-

Dawnflower; long light ginger fur, black spots around her blue eyes, she-cat, Amberthroat's mother.

Ghostglow; white tom with glowing yellow eyes.

Crescentmoon; black with blue eyes, she-cat. Apprentice- Whisperpaw

Blackwind; jet black, light green eyes, she-cat, Thornpaw and Whisperpaw's mother. Apprentice- Chippaw

Amberthroat; small red-brown she-cat with darker stripes on her tail, amber eyes.

Apprentices-

Whisperpaw; silver tabby she-cat, amber eyes.

Thornpaw; black tom, white underbelly, green eyes, Whisperpaw's brother.

Chippaw; brown tom with black ears.

Queens-

Currently None-

Elders-

Currently None-

***

Cats Outside the Clans:

Leaf; pale brown tabby tom with darker patches, long fangs, dark green eyes.

Adder; mottled, dark brown she-cat with a white underbelly, dark green eyes, Leaf's sister.

Chapter Thirty

Shadowflower's POV

It had been a quarter-moon since Silverstar had gotten her leader name. Though she wouldn't give me a straight answer about why we no longer asked for SoulClan's support, I trusted her to make a good decision. It twisted my gut and made me anxious at the thought of no longer having our ancestors to ask for help, but I fought to trust her.

Fireflywing was barely holding on. Day in and day out, the small kittypet would cough until she hacked up blood. Stormcloud was on the same foot with the illness, but he was a lot stronger than Fireflywing. The both of them had stayed in warm nests in my den for the past few snowy days. I had concluded that they both had whitecough aloud, but I knew very well that it was also the infection getting to them.

Padding out of the medicine den quietly, I hurried to Silverstar's new den. It had been a quarter-moon since she had seen Wildstar, but she still had not broken the news to the Clan about our disconnection to SoulClan. I guessed she knew their reactions wouldn't be good for her reputation. The only thing she mentioned was an official guard idea, our new deputy, and that we have a new Gathering Place.

I nudged the silver she-cat awake just as the sun peeked up over the horizon. With a groan, she rolled over. "What?" Silverstar growled.

"Two things, we need to send out as many hunting patrols as you can and you need to tell the Clan about your decision to no longer talk to SoulClan," I dipped my head to her and with that, I left. I heard Silverstar sigh as she sat up. Ever since she had gone to meet Wildstar, Silverstar had been different and cold. She wasn't how she was as a deputy.

She had named Crowflight our new deputy. I thought that was the

best decision for right now. He was loyal, serious, strong, and trustworthy. The only problem was that he was getting old. Only I seemed to realize this, though. Crowflight was stretching outside of the warriors den, arching his back and whipping his tail back and forth. "Morning," I smiled at him as I passed by. He straightened his posture and bowed his head to me.

I sat on the hardened snow and watched the Clan quietly awaken. Slowly and surely, warriors, our only apprentice, and kits woke. Foxtuft and Tigerstripe tiredly headed into the camp to switch off with Sparkdust. Sparkdust finished her shrew then padded out with a sigh. Tigerstripe was going to be left with a huge scar on is leg but his injury was healing well.

Dreampaw showed off some of her new moves to Hollowkit - who was gazing up at her with awe - while the warriors mingled together and cleaned up themselves.

Snowfern went over to her growing daughter and tried to clean Dreampaw up but she shrugged her away. "Snowfern, I can do it by myself now," She purred, touching noses with her mother.

Snowfern looked hurt but reluctantly she only nodded, heading away to the fresh-kill pile. Hollowkit didn't even look away as Dreampaw's mother talked to her. *How cute*, I thought.

Crowflight stopped in the center of the clearing and called the cats forward for the morning patrols. Silverstar appeared from her den and began trotting over to her deputy. She muttered something in his ear once she came to him. Crowflight nodded and began.

"We need a lot of hunting done. Don't come back without at least one piece of prey from everyone in your patrol," He announced, "Silverstar, Mistnose, Snowfern, hunt near StreamClan's border and check it. Dreampaw and I will go the opposite way to hunt and check out the territory. There aren't many of us but we can keep this Clan up if we work hard." He finished.

Silverstar hopped up on her rock den at that and told the Clan to stay put. *Finally!*

"For a quarter-moon now I have been deciding if this would be official or not, but now I have come to a conclusion that we will be lone-cats," she began. The RockClan cats looked confused. "RockClan will no longer be in touch with SoulClan."

"That's it? SoulClan hasn't tried to talk to us in moons, so why should we care?" Dreampaw snickered. "*Oh my*!" Tigerstripe gasped, "Can I go now? I haven't slept all night."

Snowfern was the only one who fought against it. "Why? After all they've done for our Clan, you want to cut us off from them?" She asked, generally concerned. "They haven't tried to send us help or give us signs in moons, Snowfern. They obviously already abandoned us," Tigerstripe rolled his eyes, heading away.

Silverstar's eyes flickered with something I had feared any leader of ours would get.

The cats in the patrols hurried away. I told Foxtuft I was going out to scavenge any herbs I could find. She nodded as she settled down to sleep until she had to do her shift again.

As I headed out of the slushy, cold camp, Zinnia was just hopping up onto the boulder the camp had settled onto. "Morning, Shadowflower! Just thought I would stop by to see to any cats you need help with!" She chirped.

I bowed my head to her, "Hello, Zinnia," She smiled at me. "Actually a few cats have whitecough. I'm out of catmint so I was just going to scavenge for more." I informed the small, yet intelligent, Bengal she-cat. Zinnia narrowed her eyes in thought then headed over to the medicine den.

"Find whatever! I'll do what I can." She called over her shoulder as I padded away.

Sighing, I miserably traveled through the dense forest, sniffing my way through the crisp trees. There was nothing but slush, snow, and frosty trees to be found. I eventually turned around and headed the opposite way from StreamClan's territory. *There* has *to be an abandoned Twolegnest somewhere... They like water and beautiful sites,*

don't they? I wondered, padding near the shoreline.

The shallow lake was completely frosted over with thick ice. A hardened sheet of snow covered the ice, glittering beautifully as the sun she on it. Across the lake was nothing hit trees with snow on their limbs and few clearings.

I trotted quickly through the untouched snow. As I stopped at the end of our territory, I picked up a musty smell and the slightest smell of catmint. *A Twolegnest!* I almost gasped aloud as I began rushing after the sharp scent.

The Twolegnest was *huge*. It was bigger than the ones we had come across on our journey to this territory, almost three times the size. "They must have had a lot of Twolegs to help build this!" I meowed in awe.

There was an open entrance way with a rock flooring and a lot of large tools on wooden slabs. A dusty monster was sleeping in it's shelter, which made me duck down and creep past it so I wouldn't wake it. The walls were dark brown wood with large transparent squares that were shielded with white fabrics.

In a smaller transparent square was a large plant-holder filled with catmint. My ears stood straight up and my eyes dazzled. "A-*ha*!"

I bolted up to it. There were two squares; one square opened just a crack from the side. I hopped up to the small outside slab in one jump. Squeezing through the small crack, I found myself in their sharing-tongues spot, where they got together to eat with their kin. Instead of pure white walls and marble countertops, it was splattered with crimson red blood. Shivers ran up my spine. I noticed a metal weapon holder was missing one of its sharp weapons, a red paw print beside it and the empty slot.

The saying "curiosity killed the cat" was a sure thing, because I found myself stalking through the Twolegnest in search of more pieces to this mysterious puzzle.

The tile flooring changed to a cozy grey grass-texture. A large den opened up with several large sofas in the center, a transparent slab

with wooden legs in front of the sofas, and a thin black box standing on more wood. The walls were light green and littered with small transparent boxes that were filled with memory-holders of their kin.

Gazing at them, I found my heart warming up. A tom Twolegkit was holding a newborn, the same Twolegkit held a fish bigger than it's face, and an adult she-Twoleg, an adult tom Twoleg, the young tom Twoleg, and the newborn she-Twolegkit - who was being held by the father - were all standing together with huge smiles. There were more, but I couldn't help but notice... *Other* things.

On the green wall beside the black box was splatters of blood, too. I swallowed, my curiosity dragging me around the long, grey sofa. I peeked ever so carefully around the corner. Sitting on a thin wooden stump was a tom Twoleg. The fur along my spine stood up again. I couldn't help but assume that he was the tom in the memories.

The Twoleg held a hefty stick in his bare, grey paws. His head was blown clean off, his brains all over the wall. The buzzing of flies swarmed it's body carelessly. I gasped, taking a step back. But what really got to me, was how his stomach was torn open; his insides were sprawled on the floor.

"No!" I yowled, realizing I must not be alone. A growling sound came from deeper in the Twolegnest. I dashed out of the grass-texture room and into the tile room, jumping up onto the marble countertop. I snatched the whole catmint plant, letting it's red holder slip off of the white, wooden slab and crash on the floor.

Dirt and pieces of the plant-holder was sent flying through the room. The infected Twolegs heard, I noticed as the growls became more fierce and desperate. Without thinking, I squeezed out of the transparent square's opening and leaped onto the snowy ground.

I clenched the herb in my teeth as hard as I could. All I could hear, as I tumbled through the forest, was the deafening sound of the flies' buzzing noises and my heart as it continuously attempted to leap out of my throat.

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*There she is boys and girls... The end of Bloodshed! Stay tuned for Book 2: **Shadows**. Hope you enjoyed!*
P_A83 out!